



Invitation to Quote

Invitation to Quote (ITQ) on behalf of UK Space Agency (UKSA)

Subject: Strategy Report for Earth Observation Data Architecture

Sourcing Reference Number: PS21273

UK Shared Business Services Ltd (UK SBS)
www.ukpbs.co.uk

Registered in England and Wales as a limited company. Company Number 6330639.
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VAT registration GB618 3673 25
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Version 8.0

UKSBS
Shared Business Services

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Section 1 – About UK Shared Business Services

Putting the business into shared services

UK Shared Business Services Ltd (UK SBS) brings a commercial attitude to the public sector; helping our Contracting Authorities improve efficiency, generate savings and modernise.

It is our vision to become the leading service provider for the Contracting Authorities of shared business services in the UK public sector, continuously reducing cost and improving quality of business services for Government and the public sector.

Our broad range of expert services is shared by our Contracting Authorities. This allows Contracting Authorities the freedom to focus resources on core activities; innovating and transforming their own organisations.

Core services include Procurement, Finance, Grants Admissions, Human Resources, Payroll, ISS, and Property Asset Management all underpinned by our Service Delivery and Contact Centre teams.

UK SBS is a people rather than task focused business. It's what makes us different to the traditional transactional shared services centre. What is more, being a not-for-profit organisation owned by the Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy (BEIS), UK SBS' goals are aligned with the public sector and delivering best value for the UK taxpayer.

UK Shared Business Services Ltd changed its name from RCUK Shared Services Centre Ltd in March 2013.

Our Customers

Growing from a foundation of supporting the Research Councils, 2012/13 saw Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) transition their procurement to UK SBS and Crown Commercial Services (CCS – previously Government Procurement Service) agree a Memorandum of Understanding with UK SBS to deliver two major procurement categories (construction and research) across Government.

UK SBS currently manages £700m expenditure for its Contracting Authorities. Our Contracting Authorities who have access to our services and Contracts are detailed [here](#).

Privacy Statement

At UK Shared Business Services (UK SBS) we recognise and understand that your privacy is extremely important, and we want you to know exactly what kind of information we collect about you and how we use it.

This privacy notice link below details what you can expect from UK SBS when we collect your personal information.

- We will keep your data safe and private.
- We will not sell your data to anyone.
- We will only share your data with those you give us permission to share with and only for legitimate service delivery reasons.

<https://www.uksbs.co.uk/use/pages/privacy.aspx>

Privacy Notice

This notice sets out how the Contracting Authority will use your personal data, and your rights. It is made under Articles 13 and/or 14 of the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR).

YOUR DATA

The Contracting Authority will process the following personal data:

Names and contact details of employees involved in preparing and submitting the bid; Names and contact details of employees proposed to be involved in delivery of the contract. Names, contact details, age, qualifications, and experience of employees whose CVs are submitted as part of the bid.

Purpose

The Contracting Authority are processing your personal data for the purposes of the tender exercise, or in the event of legal challenge to such tender exercise.

Legal basis of processing

The legal basis for processing your personal data is processing is necessary for the performance of a task carried out in the public interest or in the exercise of official authority vested in the data controller, such as the exercise of a function of the Crown, a Minister of the Crown, or a government department; the exercise of a function conferred on a person by an enactment; the exercise of a function of either House of Parliament; or the administration of justice.

Recipients

Your personal data will be shared by us with other Government Departments or public authorities where necessary as part of the tender exercise. The Contracting Authority may share your data if required to do so by law, for example by court order or to prevent fraud or other crime.

Retention

All submissions in connection with this tender exercise will be retained for a period of 7 years from the date of contract expiry, unless the contract is entered into as a deed in which case it will be kept for a period of 12 years from the date of contract expiry.

Your Rights

You have the right to request information about how your personal data are processed, and to request a copy of that personal data.

You have the right to request that any inaccuracies in your personal data are rectified without delay.

You have the right to request that any incomplete personal data are completed, including by means of a supplementary statement.

You have the right to request that your personal data are erased if there is no longer a justification for them to be processed.

You have the right in certain circumstances (for example, where accuracy is contested) to request that the processing of your personal data is restricted.

You have the right to object to the processing of your personal data where it is processed for direct marketing purposes.

You have the right to object to the processing of your personal data.

International Transfers

As your personal data is stored on our IT infrastructure and shared with our data processors Microsoft and Amazon Web Services, it may be transferred and stored securely in the UK and European Economic Area. Where your personal data is stored outside the UK and EEA it will be subject to equivalent legal protection through the use of Model Contract Clauses.

Complaints

If you consider that your personal data has been misused or mishandled, you may make a complaint to the Information Commissioner, who is an independent regulator. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at:

Information Commissioner's Office
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire
SK9 5AF
0303 123 1113
casework@ico.org.uk

Any complaint to the Information Commissioner is without prejudice to your right to seek redress through the courts.

Contact Details

The data controller for your personal data is:

UK Space Agency (UKSA)

You can contact the Data Protection Officer at:

UKSA Data Protection Officer, UK Space Agency, Polaris House, North Start Road, Swindon SN2 1SZ. Email: GDPR@ukspaceagency.gov.uk

Section 2 – About the Contracting Authority

UK Space Agency (UKSA)

The UK Space Agency wants the UK to lead the new space age, with the benefits of space reaching everyone. We are developing a comprehensive UK space strategy to set a bold vision for the UK in space and co-ordinate government investment in this growing industry.

The Covid-19 outbreak is an unprecedented challenge facing the UK and the rest of the world, and we recognise that there will be impacts on the space sector. The UK Space Agency is working closely with the space industry, universities and partners across the government to respond to the crisis and to ensure we emerge stronger than ever.

We have **five goals** which will drive our work over the course of the year (2020/21):

1. **Growth** – drive and sustain **UK space sector growth**
2. **Science** - deliver space-based infrastructure that enables **world-class science**
3. **Capabilities** – ensure the UK government has access to capabilities that are integral to our **national safety, security, and Critical National Infrastructure**
4. **Global** - increase the **UK's global influence in science, security and trade** through space
5. **UKSA** - Ensure **an effective UK Space Agency** which is a great place to work, supported by strong governance

UK Space Agency key achievements include:

- **The UK space sector is an economic success story** – generating an income of £14.8 billion, employing 42,000 people and supporting a further £300 billion of economic activity through the use of satellite services.
- **The UK Space Agency is encouraging further growth** by seizing the opportunities presented by the new space age, such as the increasing global demand for Earth Observation data, space launch services and the falling cost of satellites and space technologies.
- **Space can help Government achieve its ambitions for the UK's prosperity and knowledge, security and defence, and global influence.** A new National Space Council has been created to provide leadership on space policy and investment across government and is overseeing development of a new space strategy.
- **Brexit does not affect our ongoing role in the European Space Agency.** The UK made ambitious investments in future ESA programmes in November 2019. This will cement our leading role in ESA, help us develop our national capabilities and contribute to exciting new science and exploration missions.
- **The Government's spaceflight programme** – LaunchUK - will kick-start small satellite launch and sub-orbital flight from UK spaceports. The UK Space Agency is supporting projects to deliver the first commercial launches, while Government is also legislating to provide a modern regulatory framework through the Space Industry Act 2018.
- **We are developing world-class facilities** including the National Space Propulsion Facility in Westcott and the National Satellite Test Facility in Harwell (supported by £99m funding), as well as business incubators in more than 20 locations to support British start-ups hoping to grow into successful space companies.

We are using the UK space sector's research and innovation strengths to deliver sustainable economic or societal benefits to developing nations and economies through our International Partnership Programme (IPP) - a £30M per year programme funded by the BEIS Global Challenges Research Fund (GCRF).

www.BEIS.gov.uk/ukspaceagency

Section 3 - Working with the Contracting Authority.

In this section you will find details of your Procurement contact point and the timescales relating to this opportunity.

Section 3 – Contact Details		
3.1.	Contracting Authority Name and address	UK Space Agency (UKSA), Polaris House, Swindon, SN2 1SZ
3.2.	Buyer name	Alex Thomas
3.3.	Buyer contact details	ProfessionalServices@uksbs.co.uk
3.4.	Maximum value of the opportunity	£166,000.00 excluding VAT
3.5.	Process for the submission of clarifications and Bids	All correspondence shall be submitted within the Messaging Centre of the e-sourcing. Guidance Notes to support the use of Delta eSourcing is available here. Please note submission of a Bid to any email address including the Buyer <u>will</u> result in the Bid <u>not</u> being considered.

Section 3 - Timescales		
3.6.	Date of Issue of Contract Advert on Contracts Finder	Friday, 17 th December 2021
3.7.	Latest date / time ITQ clarification questions shall be received through Delta eSourcing messaging system	Thursday, 6 th January 2022 11:00am
3.8.	Latest date / time ITQ clarification answers should be sent to all Bidders by the Buyer through Delta eSourcing Portal	Monday, 10 th January 2022
3.9.	Latest date and time ITQ Bid shall be submitted through Delta eSourcing	Thursday, 13 th January 2022 11:00am
3.10.	Date Bidders should be available if clarifications are required	w/c Monday, 17 th January 2022
3.11.	Anticipated notification date of successful and unsuccessful Bids	Thursday, 27 th January 2022
3.12.	Anticipated Contract Award date	Monday, 31 st January 2022
3.13.	Anticipated Contract Start date	Monday, 7 th February 2022
3.14.	Anticipated Contract End date	Thursday, 31 st March 2022
3.15.	Bid Validity Period	90 Days

Section 4 – Specification

Introduction

The UK Space Agency is seeking to procure a data architecture specialist to produce a report setting out clear options for delivering a sustainable and coherent national Earth Observation data architecture concept for the UK. The UK lacks a focal point for unique UK data development. Existing infrastructure, funded and pioneered by UKSA, is now reaching a natural obsolescence and will not be able to support the projects we fund (IPP, Business Applications) without intervention. The ground structure underpinning the flow of Copernicus Sentinel data into the UK is similarly impacted. Government Departments and agencies naturally use their budgets to meet their own needs but there is no overarching vision for maximising this investment. Satellite data exploitation is a key area to materialise growth in the space sector, yet despite investment and capability there are areas where the UK is falling behind and conceding progress to our European neighbours. UKSA EO & Climate & Earth Intelligence Teams have conducted extensive research into the UK satellite data landscape, holding extensive discussions with internal UKSA stakeholders, cross-Government colleagues, industry and academia. We know what we want and where the potential interfaces are (MoD, Geospatial, DEFRA): we need expert advice on how to deliver it.

Aims & Objectives

The aim of this procurement will be to procure a data architecture specialist to produce a report setting out clear options for delivering a sustainable and coherent national Earth Observation data architecture concept for the UK. The procurement will commission an organisation to undertake the activity needed to deliver the report, which will include the involvement of data architects from some of the main UK industry primes, including UKRI. This is a natural progression from the publication of the National Space Strategy and provides a clear step to establishing UKSA in its role as a delivery agency.

This report aims to address UKSA needs whilst identifying a clear lead for collaboration between Government departments, industry and the wider sector. This will allow government departments to meet their needs in unison by providing a fundamental design intention for other areas to join and link up as security and technology develops and new programmes come online.

The successful supplier must work with data architects from some of the main UK industry primes (including UKRI) – this will focus the solution at the cutting edge of technology as well as optimising engagement with areas for private investment.

The objectives of the report are to address:

- what is needed in/for the UK to start to deliver the ambitions in the National Space Strategy,
- what UKSA needs to support projects, CSR delivery and leverage its international collaborations and investments,

- forming an effective platform or hub which other Government departments and agencies can link into (allowing minimal cost/maximum use) and which incorporates the best of our existing national capability,
- wider sector needs within industry and academia and the opportunities for private/public partnership.

Scope

This report is to be different to previous attempts to identify capability and pin down operating models. It will address concerns around rapid technical obsolescence and the resource that would go into managing such a programme and any resulting facilities.

Assumptions

It is assumed:

- the supplier will include the involvement of data architects from some of the main UK industry primes
- the supplier will need to consult with UKRI when carrying out the report
- UKSA will not be liable for any expenditure made by the supplier to other organisations in the delivery of the report. Any such costs will be provided for within the value of the procurement, or the suppliers own resources.
- the report will have been completed and delivered to UKSA by the end of the Financial Year 2021/2022

Requirement

UKSA require a report assessing suitable options for delivering a sustainable and coherent national Earth Observation data architecture concept for the UK. The report will assess a range of data and evidence in providing robust evidence based options in support of the EO data architecture concept for the UK.

The report will provide options and costs for delivering the underlying infrastructure environment to produce a service which connects users in diverse sectors to access an agile tailorable hub of trusted high-quality EO products. It will lay out how best to provide management of satellite data as well as the processing power to enable analysis and visualisation to make best scientific and commercial use of long-term climate data from space. The report will provide options for how the UK can meet its ambitious space and climate goals by investing in domestic data infrastructure that keep up with the technological advances and complement the UK's international partnerships and collaborations. It will describe the delivery of a system of EO data architecture that will be technologically disruptive and contain the elements capable of creating trustworthy data and information available from the system.

The aim is to identify where UKSA investment is required to build the processing, archiving, cataloguing and access point infrastructure to provide the UK with the reputation of being the "place-to-go" for business, academia, and public sector to obtain analysis-ready-data (ARD) and cutting-edge climate services. The infrastructure's ultimate goal is to increase productivity and economic growth within the UK and have the strongest competitive advantage internationally for being a provider of trusted EO data to inform effective climate policy and business decisions.

The report should demonstrate an understanding of the wider EO and climate services market, and how UK data infrastructure can be built to harness and exploit it. The choice of architecture chosen will need to be a result of identifying and aligning the key trends of the market with national and international priorities. For example, how to build/harness the type of processing capabilities required to increase production and exploitation of EO ARD, with a view to increasing commercialisation of academic research and furthering exports of EO services? How can we build a data architecture that exploits EO data so that it can underpin success in sectors such as finance, insurance, and agriculture?

Any EO data architecture solutions will need to include data standards, quality assurance, uncertainty evaluation, and interoperability to enable end-users of the data to confidently integrate the data from many sources in a seamless manner, reducing the potential of data gaps or anomalies in their operations.

The UK data architecture concept outlined in the report will need to include the means and methodologies required to manage data, such as: cataloguing and inventorying, storing, processing/reprocessing, monitoring, and curating, and long-term archiving.

The report must also provide a vision for ensuring the quality and interoperability of EO data, via: AI/Machine Learning, calibration and validation, big data analytics, and harmonisation.

The report will provide options for delivering platform/cloud technologies to host and disseminate the data, alongside a place where software toolkits can be provided or “be brought to the data” by the user. Any data architecture concept will need to be capable of accessing and ingesting a myriad of satellite and in-situ data from sources, including (but not exhaustive of): Copernicus (including third-party and heritage missions), UK missions, private sector sources (e.g., Amazon Web Services), CEOS/GEO and international sharing and collaboration sources.

The report will set out clear options for delivering a sustainable national EO data architecture concept for the UK with a view to forming an effective platform or hub which will host timely and trusted EO and Climate data products, for other Government departments and commercial entities to link into (allowing minimal cost/maximum use). The report will incorporate the best of the UKs existing national capability, highlight emerging technologies/facilities, and identify gaps where government investment should be a priority.

The report will define what UKSA needs to support projects, CSR delivery and leverage its international collaborations and investments. It will be mindful of the UK’s collaborations and contributions with the EU in regard to the Copernicus Programme, upcoming ESA contributions, current ESA contracts, and the transformation of ESA’s Collaborative Ground Segment.

The report is to be delivered in draft by 14th March 2022. This will be reviewed by the UKSA Project Manager, who will provide comments and identify any areas that require additional work or edits. The final report, incorporating all UKSA provided edits to date will be delivered electronically to the UKSA project manager by 31st March 2022.

Contracting Reporting Requirements

Given the extremely short timescale the supplier has to produce the report, it will be prudent to aim to maximise the time that the successful supplier has for activities pertaining to the production of the report. Therefore, the reporting obligations will be kept to a minimum.

The successful supplier be required to report formally to the UKSA contract manager once, at the end of the delivery of the project, demonstrating completion aligned with the objectives

for the contract. The plan for the work should be detailed within the bidder's proposal as part of the project work plan and approach and methodology and will be finalised at contract award stage.

In addition, it is expected that there will be a one-hour video meeting between the UKSA contract manager and the successful supplier, halfway through the delivery of the project. This meeting will provide an update to the UKSA contract manager, and an opportunity for the supplier to seek further guidance if required.

Key Reporting Criteria

- 1) Analysis of the breakdown of total hours performed i.e., number of hours spent working on the report and number of hours spent collaborating with other organisations
- 2) A breakdown of the costs for the time and expertise of other organisations

Terms and Conditions

Bidders are to note that any requested modifications to the Contracting Authority Terms and Conditions on the grounds of statutory and legal matters only, shall be raised as a formal clarification during the permitted clarification period.

Section 5 – Evaluation model

The evaluation model below shall be used for this ITQ, which will be determined to two decimal places.

Where a question is 'for information only' it will not be scored.

The evaluation team may comprise staff from UK SBS and the Contracting Authority and any specific external stakeholders the Contracting Authority deems required.

The evaluation and if required team may comprise staff from UK SBS and the Contracting Authority and any specific external stakeholders the Contracting Authority deems required. After evaluation and if required moderation scores will be finalised by performing a calculation to identify (at question level) the mean average of all evaluators (Example – a question is scored by three evaluators and judged as scoring 5, 5 and 6. These scores will be added together and divided by the number of evaluators to produce the final score of 5.33 ($5+5+6=16 \div 3 = 5.33$))

Pass / Fail criteria		
Questionnaire	Q No.	Question subject
Commercial	SEL1.2	Employment breaches/ Equality
Commercial	SEL1.3	Compliance to Section 54 of the Modern Slavery Act
Commercial	SEL2.12	General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) Act and the Data Protection Act 2018
Commercial	FOI1.1	Freedom of Information
Commercial	AW1.1	Form of Bid
Commercial	AW1.3	Certificate of Bona Fide Bid
Commercial	AW3.1	Validation check
Commercial	AW4.1	Compliance to the Contract Terms
Commercial	AW4.2	Changes to the Contract Terms
Price	AW5.1	Maximum Budget
Quality	AW6.1	Compliance to the Specification
Quality	AW6.2	Variable Bids
Quality	AW6.3	Compliance with Delivery Timescales
-	-	Invitation to Quote – received on time within e-sourcing tool
In the event of a Bidder failing to meet the requirements of a Mandatory pass / fail criteria, the Contracting Authority reserves the right to disqualify the Bidder and not consider evaluation of any of the Award stage scoring methodology or Mandatory pass / fail criteria.		

Scoring criteria

Evaluation Justification Statement

In consideration of this particular requirement the Contracting Authority has decided to evaluate Potential Providers by adopting the weightings/scoring mechanism detailed within this ITQ. The Contracting Authority considers these weightings to be in line with existing best practice for a requirement of this type.

Questionnaire	Q No.	Question subject	Maximum Marks
Price	AW5.2	Price	15%
Quality	PROJ1.1	Approach and Methodology	40%
Quality	PROJ1.2	Expertise in Delivery	10%
Quality	PROJ1.3	Project Work Plan	20%
Quality	PROJ1.4	Project Team and Capacity to Deliver	10%
Quality	PROJ1.5	Risk Management	5%

Evaluation of criteria

Non-Price elements

Each question will be judged on a score from 0 to 100, which shall be subjected to a multiplier to reflect the percentage of the evaluation criteria allocated to that question.

Where an evaluation criterion is worth 20% then the 0-100 score achieved will be multiplied by 20%.

Example if a Bidder scores 60 from the available 100 points this will equate to 12% by using the following calculation:

$$\text{Score} = \{\text{weighting percentage}\} \times \{\text{bidder's score}\} = 20\% \times 60 = 12$$

The same logic will be applied to groups of questions which equate to a single evaluation criterion.

The 0-100 score shall be based on (unless otherwise stated within the question):

0	The Question is not answered, or the response is completely unacceptable.
10	Extremely poor response – they have completely missed the point of the question.
20	Very poor response and not wholly acceptable. Requires major revision to the response to make it acceptable. Only partially answers the requirement, with major deficiencies and little relevant detail proposed.
40	Poor response only partially satisfying the question requirements with deficiencies apparent. Some useful evidence provided but response falls well short of expectations. Low probability of being a capable supplier.
60	Response is acceptable but remains basic and could have been expanded upon. Response is sufficient but does not inspire.

80	Good response which describes their capabilities in detail which provides high levels of assurance consistent with a quality provider. The response includes a full description of techniques and measurements currently employed.
100	Response is exceptional and clearly demonstrates they are capable of meeting the requirement. No significant weaknesses noted. The response is compelling in its description of techniques and measurements currently employed, providing full assurance consistent with a quality provider.

All questions will be scored based on the above mechanism. Please be aware that there may be multiple evaluators. If so, their individual scores will be averaged (mean) to determine your final score as follows:

Example

Evaluator 1 scored your bid as 60

Evaluator 2 scored your bid as 60

Evaluator 3 scored your bid as 40

Evaluator 4 scored your bid as 40

Your final score will $(60+60+40+40) \div 4 = 50$

Once the above evaluation process has been undertaken and the scores are apportioned by evaluator(s) this will then be subject to an independent commercial review and moderation meeting, if required by the commercial lead, any and all changes will be formally recorded relative to the regulatory obligations associated with this procurement, so as to ensure that the procurement has been undertaken in a robust and transparent way.

Price elements will be judged on the following criteria.

The lowest price for a response which meets the pass criteria shall score 100. All other bids shall be scored on a pro rata basis in relation to the lowest price. The score is then subject to a multiplier to reflect the percentage value of the price criterion.

For example - Bid 1 £100,000 scores 100.

Bid 2 £120,000 differential of £20,000 or 20% remove 20% from price scores 80

Bid 3 £150,000 differential £50,000 remove 50% from price scores 50.

Bid 4 £175,000 differential £75,000 remove 75% from price scores 25.

Bid 5 £200,000 differential £100,000 remove 100% from price scores 0.

Bid 6 £300,000 differential £200,000 remove 100% from price scores 0.

Where the scoring criterion is worth 50% then the 0-100 score achieved will be multiplied by 50.

In the example if a supplier scores 80 from the available 100 points this will equate to 40% by using the following calculation: $\text{Score/Total Points multiplied by 50}$ $(80/100 \times 50 = 40)$

The lowest score possible is 0 even if the price submitted is more than 100% greater than the lowest price.

This evaluation criteria will therefore not be subject to any averaging, as this is a mathematical scoring criterion, but will still be subject to a commercial review.

Evaluation process

The evaluation process will feature some, if not all, the following phases.

Stage	Summary of activity
Receipt and Opening	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• ITQ logged upon opening in alignment with UK SBS's procurement procedures.• Any ITQ Bid received after the closing date will be rejected unless circumstances attributed to the Contracting Authority or the e-sourcing tool beyond the bidder control are responsible for late submission.
Compliance check	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Check all Mandatory requirements are acceptable to the Contracting Authority.• Unacceptable Bids maybe subject to clarification by the Contracting Authority or rejection of the Bid.
Scoring of the Bid	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Evaluation team will independently score the Bid and provide a commentary of their scoring justification against the criteria.
Clarifications	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Evaluation team may require written clarification to Bids
Re - scoring of the Bid and Clarifications	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Following Clarification responses, the Evaluation team reserve the right to independently re-score the Bid and Clarifications and provide a commentary of their re-scoring justification against the Evaluation criteria.
Moderation meeting (if required to reach an award decision)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• To review the outcomes of the Commercial review• To agree final scoring for each Bid, relative rankings of the Bids
Due diligence of the Bid	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• the Contracting Authority may request the following requirements at any stage of the Procurement.• Submission of insurance documents from the Bidder• Request for evidence of documents / accreditations referenced in the / Invitation to Quote response / Bid and / or Clarifications from the Bidder• Taking up of Bidder references from the Bidders Customers.• Financial Credit check for the Bidder
Validation of unsuccessful Bidders	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• To confirm contents of the letters to provide details of scoring and meaningful feedback on the unsuccessful Bidders Bid in comparison with the successful Bidders Bid.

Section 6 – Evaluation questionnaire

Bidders should note that the evaluation questionnaire is located within the **e-sourcing questionnaire**.

Guidance on how to register and use the e-sourcing portal is available at <http://www.uksbs.co.uk/services/procure/Pages/supplier.aspx>

PLEASE NOTE THE QUESTIONS ARE NOT NUMBERED SEQUENTIALLY

Section 7 – General Information

What makes a good bid – some simple do's 😊

DO:

- 7.1 Do comply with Procurement document instructions. Failure to do so may lead to disqualification.
- 7.2 Do provide the Bid on time, and in the required format. Remember that the date/time given for a response is the last date that it can be accepted; we are legally bound to disqualify late submissions. Responses received after the date indicated in the ITQ shall not be considered by the Contracting Authority, unless the Bidder can justify that the reason for the delay, is solely attributable to the Contracting Authority
- 7.3 Do ensure you have read all the training materials to utilise e-sourcing tool prior to responding to this Bid. If you send your Bid by email or post it will be rejected.
- 7.4 Do use Microsoft Word, PowerPoint Excel 97-03 or compatible formats, or PDF unless agreed in writing by the Buyer. If you use another file format without our written permission, we may reject your Bid.
- 7.5 Do ensure you utilise the Delta eSourcing messaging system to raise any clarifications to our ITQ. You should note that we will release the answer to the question to all Bidders and where we suspect the question contains confidential information, we may modify the content of the question to protect the anonymity of the Bidder or their proposed solution
- 7.6 Do answer the question, it is not enough simply to cross-reference to a 'policy', web page or another part of your Bid, the evaluation team have limited time to assess bids and if they can't find the answer, they can't score it.
- 7.7 Do consider who the Contracting Authority is and what they want – a generic answer does not necessarily meet every Contracting Authority's needs.
- 7.8 Do reference your documents correctly, specifically where supporting documentation is requested e.g. referencing the question/s they apply to.
- 7.9 Do provide clear, concise and ideally generic contact details; telephone numbers, e-mails and fax details.
- 7.10 Do complete all questions in the questionnaire or we may reject your Bid.
- 7.11 Do ensure that the Response and any documents accompanying it are in the English Language, the Contracting Authority reserve the right to disqualify any full or part responses that are not in English.
- 7.12 Do check and recheck your Bid before dispatch.

What makes a good bid – some simple do not's Ⓜ

DO NOT

- 7.13 Do not cut and paste from a previous document and forget to change the previous details such as the previous buyer's name.
- 7.14 Do not attach 'glossy' brochures that have not been requested, they will not be read unless we have asked for them. Only send what has been requested and only send supplementary information if we have offered the opportunity so to do.
- 7.15 Do not share the Procurement documents, they are confidential and should not be shared with anyone without the Buyers written permission.
- 7.16 Do not seek to influence the procurement process by requesting meetings or contacting UK SBS or the Contracting Authority to discuss your Bid. If your Bid requires clarification the Buyer will contact you. All information secured outside of formal Buyer communications shall have no Legal standing or worth and should not be relied upon.
- 7.17 Do not contact any UK SBS staff or the Contracting Authority staff without the Buyers written permission or we may reject your Bid.
- 7.18 Do not collude to fix or adjust the price or withdraw your Bid with another Party as we will reject your Bid.
- 7.19 Do not offer UK SBS or the Contracting Authority staff any inducement or we will reject your Bid.
- 7.20 Do not seek changes to the Bid after responses have been submitted and the deadline for Bids to be submitted has passed.
- 7.21 Do not cross reference answers to external websites or other parts of your Bid, the cross references and website links will not be considered.
- 7.22 Do not exceed word counts, the additional words will not be considered.
- 7.23 Do not make your Bid conditional on acceptance of your own Terms of Contract, as your Bid will be rejected.
- 7.24 Do not unless explicitly requested by the Contracting Authority either in the procurement documents or via a formal clarification from the Contracting Authority send your response by any way other than via e-sourcing tool. Responses received by any other method than requested will not be considered for the opportunity.

Some additional guidance notes

- 7.25 All enquiries with respect to access to the e-sourcing tool and problems with functionality within the tool must be submitted to Delta eSourcing, Telephone 0845 270 7050
- 7.26 Bidders will be specifically advised where attachments are permissible to support a question response within the e-sourcing tool. Where they are not permissible any attachments submitted will not be considered as part of the evaluation process.
- 7.27 Question numbering is not sequential and all questions which require submission are included in the Section 6 Evaluation Questionnaire.
- 7.28 Any Contract offered may not guarantee any volume of work or any exclusivity of supply.
- 7.29 We do not guarantee to award any Contract as a result of this procurement
- 7.30 All documents issued or received in relation to this procurement shall be the property of the Contracting Authority / UKSBS.
- 7.31 We can amend any part of the procurement documents at any time prior to the latest date / time Bids shall be submitted through the Delta eSourcing Portal.
- 7.32 If you are a Consortium you must provide details of the Consortiums structure.
- 7.33 Bidders will be expected to comply with the Freedom of Information Act 2000, or your Bid will be rejected.
- 7.34 Bidders should note the Government's transparency agenda requires your Bid and any Contract entered into to be published on a designated, publicly searchable web site. By submitting a response to this ITQ Bidders are agreeing that their Bid and Contract may be made public
- 7.35 Your bid will be valid for 90 days or your Bid will be rejected.
- 7.36 Bidders may only amend the contract terms during the clarification period only, only if you can demonstrate there is a legal or statutory reason why you cannot accept them. If you request changes to the Contract terms without such grounds and the Contracting Authority fail to accept your legal or statutory reason is reasonably justified, we may reject your Bid.
- 7.37 We will let you know the outcome of your Bid evaluation and where requested will provide a written debrief of the relative strengths and weaknesses of your Bid.
- 7.38 If you fail mandatory pass / fail criteria we will reject your Bid.
- 7.39 Bidders are required to use IE8, IE9, Chrome or Firefox in order to access the functionality of the Delta eSourcing Portal.
- 7.40 Bidders should note that if they are successful with their proposal the Contracting Authority reserves the right to ask additional compliancy checks prior to the award of

any Contract. In the event of a Bidder failing to meet one of the compliancy checks the Contracting Authority may decline to proceed with the award of the Contract to the successful Bidder.

- 7.41 All timescales are set using a 24-hour clock and are based on British Summer Time or Greenwich Mean Time, depending on which applies at the point when Date and Time Bids shall be submitted through the Delta eSourcing Portal.
- 7.42 All Central Government Departments and their Executive Agencies and Non-Departmental Public Bodies are subject to control and reporting within Government. In particular, they report to the Cabinet Office and HM Treasury for all expenditure. Further, the Cabinet Office has a cross-Government role delivering overall Government policy on public procurement - including ensuring value for money and related aspects of good procurement practice.

For these purposes, the Contracting Authority may disclose within Government any of the Bidders documentation/information (including any that the Bidder considers to be confidential and/or commercially sensitive such as specific bid information) submitted by the Bidder to the Contracting Authority during this Procurement. The information will not be disclosed outside Government. Bidders taking part in this ITQ consent to these terms as part of the competition process.

- 7.43 The Government introduced its new Government Security Classifications (GSC) classification scheme on the 2nd April 2014 to replace the current Government Protective Marking System (GPMS). A key aspect of this is the reduction in the number of security classifications used. All Bidders are encouraged to make themselves aware of the changes and identify any potential impacts in their Bid, as the protective marking and applicable protection of any material passed to, or generated by, you during the procurement process or pursuant to any Contract awarded to you as a result of this tender process will be subject to the new GSC. The link below to the Gov.uk website provides information on the new GSC:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/government-security-classifications>

The Contracting Authority reserves the right to amend any security related term or condition of the draft contract accompanying this ITQ to reflect any changes introduced by the GSC. In particular where this ITQ is accompanied by any instructions on safeguarding classified information (e.g. a Security Aspects Letter) as a result of any changes stemming from the new GSC, whether in respect of the applicable protective marking scheme, specific protective markings given, the aspects to which any protective marking applies or otherwise. This may relate to the instructions on safeguarding classified information (e.g. a Security Aspects Letter) as they apply to the procurement as they apply to the procurement process and/or any contracts awarded to you as a result of the procurement process.

USEFUL INFORMATION LINKS

- [Contracts Finder](#)
- [Equalities Act introduction](#)
- [Bribery Act introduction](#)
- [Freedom of information Act](#)

8.0 Freedom of information

8.4.1 In accordance with the obligations and duties placed upon public authorities by the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (the 'FoIA') and the Environmental Information Regulations 2004 (the 'EIR') (each as amended from time to time), UK SBS or the Contracting Authority may be required to disclose information submitted by the Bidder to the Contracting Authority.

8.4.2 In respect of any information submitted by a Bidder that it considers to be commercially sensitive the Bidder should complete the Freedom of Information declaration question defined in the Question FOI1.2.

8.4.3 Where a Bidder identifies information as commercially sensitive, the Contracting Authority will endeavour to maintain confidentiality. Bidders should note, however, that, even where information is identified as commercially sensitive, the Contracting Authority may be required to disclose such information in accordance with the FoIA or the Environmental Information Regulations. In particular, the Contracting Authority is required to form an independent judgment concerning whether the information is exempt from disclosure under the FoIA or the EIR and whether the public interest favours disclosure or not. Accordingly, the Contracting Authority cannot guarantee that any information marked 'confidential' or "commercially sensitive" will not be disclosed.

8.4.4 Where a Bidder receives a request for information under the FoIA or the EIR during the procurement, this should be immediately passed on to UK SBS or the Contracting Authority and the Bidder should not attempt to answer the request without first consulting with the Contracting Authority.

8.4.5 Bidders are reminded that the Government's transparency agenda requires that sourcing documents, including ITQ templates such as this, are published on a designated, publicly searchable web site, and, that the same applies to other sourcing documents issued by UK SBS or the Contracting Authority, and any contract entered into by the Contracting Authority with its preferred supplier once the procurement is complete. By submitting a response to this ITQ Bidders are agreeing that their participation and contents of their Response may be made public.

8.5. Response Validity

8.5.1 Your Response should remain open for consideration for a period of 90 days. A Response valid for a shorter period may be rejected.

8.6. Timescales

8.6.1 [Section 3](#) of the ITQ sets out the proposed procurement timetable. the Contracting Authority reserves the right to extend the dates and will advise potential Bidders of any change to the dates.

8.7. The Contracting Authority's Contact Details

8.7.1 Unless stated otherwise in these Instructions or in writing from UK SBS or the Contracting Authority, all communications from Bidders (including their sub-contractors, consortium members, consultants and advisers) during the period of this procurement must be directed through the e-sourcing tool to the designated UK SBS contact.

8.7.2

All enquiries with respect to access to the e-sourcing tool may be submitted to Delta eSourcing on 0845 270 7050 please note this is a free self-registration website and this can be done by completing the online questionnaire at <https://uksbs.delta-esourcing.com/>

8.7.3 Bidders should be mindful that the designated Contact should not under any circumstances be sent a copy of their Response outside of the e-sourcing tool. Failure to follow this requirement will result in disqualification of the Response.

Appendix ‘A’ Glossary of Terms

TERM	MEANING
“UK SBS”	means UK Shared Business Services Ltd herein after referred to as UK SBS.
“Bid”, “Response”, “Submitted Bid”, or “ITQ Response”	means the Bidders formal offer in response to this Invitation to Quote
“Bidder(s)”	means the organisations being invited to respond to this Invitation to Quote
“Call Off Contract”	means the document set out in Schedule 3 of the Contract
“Central Purchasing Body”	means a duly constituted public sector organisation which procures supplies/services/works for and on behalf of contracting authorities
“Conditions of Bid”	means the terms and conditions set out in this ITQ relating to the submission of a Bid
“Competed Services	means the competed services which will be Ordered from the Contract following a Mini-Competition and are set out at Annex A of the Contract
“Contract”	means the agreement to be entered by the Contracting Authority and the Supplier following any award under the procurement
“Contracting Bodies”	means the Contracting Authority and any other contracting authorities described in the Contracts Finder Contract Notice
“Contracting Authority”	A public body regulated under the Public Procurement Regulations on whose behalf the procurement is being run
“Customer”	means the legal entity (or entities) for which any Contract agreed will be made accessible to.
“Due Diligence Information”	means the background and supporting documents and information provided by the Contracting Authority for the purpose of better informing the Bidders responses to this ITQ
"EIR"	mean the Environmental Information Regulations 2004 together with any guidance and/or codes of practice issued by the Information Commissioner or relevant Government department in relation to such regulations
“FoIA”	means the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and any subordinate legislation made under such Act from time to time together with any guidance and/or codes of practice issued by the Information Commissioner or relevant Government department in relation to such legislation
“Invitation to Quote” or “ITQ”	means this Invitation to Quote documentation and all related documents published by the Contracting Authority and made available to Bidders and includes the Due Diligence Information. NOTE: This document is often referred to as an Invitation to Tender within other organisations
“Mandatory”	Means a pass / fail criteria which must be met in order for a Bid to be considered, unless otherwise specified.
“Named Procurement person ”	means the single point of contact for the Contracting Authority based in UK SBS that will be dealing with the procurement
“Order”	means an order for served by any Contracting Body on the Supplier
“Other Public Bodies”	means all Contracting Bodies except the Contracting Authority

“Supplier(s)”	means the organisation(s) awarded the Contract
“Supplies / Services / Works”	means any supplies/services and supplies or works set out at within <u>Section [4] Specification</u>