



Invitation to Quote

Invitation to Quote (ITQ) on behalf of Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE)

Subject UK SBS Qualitative Review of the UK's Interdisciplinary Research (IDR)

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

Registered in England and Wales as a limited company. Company Number 6330639.
Registered Office North Star House, North Star Avenue, Swindon, Wiltshire SN2 1FF
VAT registration GB618 3673 25
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UKSBS

Shared Business Services

Sourcing reference number **BLOJEU-CR150104HEFCE**

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Table of Contents

Section	Content
1	<u>About UK Shared Business Services Ltd.</u>
2	<u>About our Customer</u>
3	<u>Working with UK Shared Business Services Ltd.</u>
4	<u>Specification</u>
5	<u>Evaluation model</u>
6	<u>Evaluation questionnaire</u>
7	<u>General Information</u>

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 customers improve efficiency, generate savings and modernise.

It is our vision to become the leading provider for our customers 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 customers. This allows our customers 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 its customers, 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 Innovation and Skills (BIS) 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 Customers.

Our Procurement ambition

Our vision is to be recognised as a centre of excellence and deliver a broad range of procurement services across the public sector; to maintain and grow a procurement service unrivalled in public sector.

Procurement is a market-shaping function. Industry derived benchmarks indicate that UK SBS is already performing at or above “best in class” in at least three key measures (percentage savings, compliant spend, spend under management) and compare well against most other measures.

Over the next five years, it is the function’s ambition to lead a cultural change in procurement in the public sector. The natural extension of category management is to bring about a fundamental change in the attitude to supplier relationship management.

Our philosophy sees the supplier as an asset to the business and the route to maximising value from supply. This is not a new concept in procurement generally, but it is not a philosophy which is widely employed in the public sector.

We are ideally positioned to “lead the charge” in the government’s initiative to reform procurement in the public sector.

UK SBS Procurement’s unique selling points are:

- Focus on the full procurement cycle
- Leaders in category management in common and specialised areas
- Expertise in the delivery of major commercial projects
- That we are leaders in procurement to support research
- Use of cutting edge technologies which are superior to those used generally used across the public sector.
- Use of market leading analytical tools to provide comprehensive Business Intelligence
- Active customer and supplier management

‘UK SBS’ contribution to the Government Procurement Agenda has been impressive. Through innovation and leadership UK SBS has built an attractive portfolio of procurement services from P2P to Strategy Category Management.’

John Collington

Former Government Chief Procurement Officer

Section 2 – About Our Customer

Higher Education Funding Council for England

HEFCE distributes public money to higher education institutions in England and ensures that this money is used to deliver the greatest benefits to students and the wider public.

In 2014-15 HEFCE directly funded 130 universities and higher education colleges and 212 further education colleges. The funding is used to support institutions' teaching, research, knowledge exchange and related activities. This includes research and activity to ensure that everyone with the potential to benefit from higher education has the chance to do so.

To ensure that this money is being used appropriately, HEFCE:

- monitors the institutions' financial and managerial health
- ensures that the quality of teaching is assessed
- organises the assessment of research quality with the other UK funding bodies.

2013 Survey of Higher Education Institutions and other Stakeholders

An independent survey has shown further improvements in our communication and relations with stakeholders.

The survey, carried out by Pye Tait Consulting between July and October 2013, found that HEFCE is considered by its stakeholders to be highly respected, trusted and approachable. Eighty per cent are satisfied with their relationship with HEFCE – an overall improvement since previous surveys were undertaken in 2009 and 2007.

HEFCE is using the survey results to further improve its relations, operations and services.

Further information can be found at: <http://www.hefce.ac.uk/>

Section 3 - Working with UK Shared Business Services Ltd.

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	Customer Name and address	Charlotte Lester – Nicholson House, Lime Kiln Close, Stoke Gifford, Bristol, BS34 8SR
3.2	Buyer name	Rebecca Fish
3.3	Buyer contact details	research@uksbs.co.uk
3.4	Estimated value of the Opportunity	£80,000 including VAT
3.5	Process for the submission of clarifications and Bids	All correspondence shall be submitted within the Emptoris e-sourcing tool. Guidance Notes to support the use of Emptoris 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 and location of original Advert	08/12/2015 – Contracts Finder
3.7	Latest date/time ITQ clarification questions should be received through Emptoris messaging system	06/01/2016 11:00
3.8	Latest date/time ITQ clarification answers should be sent to all potential Bidders by the Buyer through Emptoris	08/01/2016 14:00
3.9	Latest date/time ITQ Bid shall be submitted through Emptoris	14/01/2016 12:00
3.10	Date/time Bidders should be available if face to face clarifications are required	19/01/2016
3.11	Anticipated rejection of unsuccessful Bids date	22/01/2016
3.12	Anticipated Award date	22/01/2016
3.13	Anticipated Contract Start date	25/01/2016
3.14	Anticipated Contract End date	23/05/2016
3.15	Bid Validity Period	60 Days from receipt

Section 4 – Specification

Higher Education Funding Council for England

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- ensures that the quality of teaching is assessed
- organises the assessment of research quality with the other UK funding bodies.

Background

This document invites tenders to undertake an examination of the drivers for success and failure in interdisciplinary research (IDR). Researchers are asked to apply a range of methods including in-depth interviews and quantitative surveying of stakeholders. The sample of stakeholders must be broadly representative of higher education institutions, researchers, disciplines and funders across the UK. The primary output will be a written report to the funders containing a clear assessment of the current IDR landscape in the UK which will be published. HEFCE will work closely with the project team throughout and will require weekly updates by email or telephone as required updates on progress and findings.

For the purpose of this tender documentation IDR will be used to refer to all types of research involving more than one discipline ('multidisciplinary', 'interdisciplinary,' 'cross-disciplinary' and 'transdisciplinary' research.)

What is interdisciplinary research?

Interdisciplinarity is often understood as work involving more than one discipline however there is much debate regarding the distinctions between different forms of Interdisciplinarity, the landscape is complex. The work will require agreed definitions to inform the frame of the research and we recommend that the definitions developed as part of a Review of the UK's Interdisciplinary Research¹ are applied for consistency and comparability purposes.

¹ <http://www.hefce.ac.uk/pubs/rereports/Year/2015/analysisREFimpact/Title,103621,en.html>

Why this topic?

IDR is an important element of the research landscape. It is equipped to address some of society's most complex challenges and can lead to long term impact through the application of its outcomes. Recent work undertaken by Kings' College on behalf of the UK funding bodies indicates that the research which underpinned 87% of the REF impact case studies submitted was interdisciplinary in nature².

The structures in today's UK higher education system reflect the monodisciplinary traditions which emerged during the 19th and 20th centuries. There have been a number of interventions over the last decade through funding and assessment to support the development of IDR. Funders of HE research have sought to support a research environment which allows the right teams to come together to address complex research challenges, they have not sought to simply incentivise quantity. The academy and institutions have also taken steps to develop and support IDR³ however anecdotal evidence indicates that despite increasing opportunities for IDR barriers still exist.

Recent Associated policy research

There is a wide body of literature available which explores the practice of interdisciplinary research. In the summer of 2015 HEFCE, in partnership with the other UK higher education funding bodies and the Medical Research Council, published A review of the UK's interdisciplinary research landscape using a citation-based approach⁴

Bidders are expected to take into account the findings and methodological limitations of this research in the development of their approach to the work.

The key findings of the research were that:

- UK interdisciplinary research activity is growing in intensity, in line with a global trend
- UK interdisciplinary research is highly collaborative in international terms, with over 45 per cent of the most interdisciplinary publications co-authored with international colleagues
- academia makes a major contribution to UK interdisciplinary research, with 85 per cent of the most interdisciplinary publications including at least one author from academia.

The report also observed:

- a higher intensity of interdisciplinary research activity in the emerging research nations included in the study
- a lower citation impact associated with interdisciplinary research among all countries examined

² <http://www.hefce.ac.uk/pubs/rereports/Year/2015/analysisREFimpact/Title,103621,en.html>

³ <https://www.dur.ac.uk/ias/?itemno=25309>

⁴ <http://www.hefce.ac.uk/pubs/rereports/Year/2015/interdisc/Title,104883,en.html>

- the high and stable performance of UK research, with the UK's publications (including the most interdisciplinary) attracting the highest citation impact of all comparator countries.

Aims and objectives of the Project

The purpose of this research is to address the following key question

- What barriers and incentives to IDR are present in the UK HE research and funding culture?

The work will consider activity taking place in the last 1-3 years as new and activity greater than three years but with a definable legacy as the medium to long term.

It will be essential to engage with funders, researchers, research managers, strategic leaders and relevant academic and sector bodies to gather the full range of perspectives. The research should consider the primary question from the perspectives of institutions, researchers and policy:

Institutions	Researchers	Policy
Stimulating IDR	Undertaking IDR	Funding IDR
Sustaining IDR	Disseminating IDR	Assessing IDR
Exploiting IDR	Utilising IDR	Impact and IDR

Scope

The focus of this work is an examination of the barriers and incentives in interdisciplinary research (IDR) across the UK and their role in driving or inhibiting the development of a successful interdisciplinary research culture. It is not expected that the successful bidder will undertake further specific work regarding international comparators however they should be able to reflect on the international landscape where relevant.

Sample

The research sample should be representative of stakeholder groups including funders, HE institution type and size whilst capturing researchers across career stages and the disciplines. The successful bidder will also need to engage with research funders, research managers, strategic leaders and relevant academic and sector bodies. The research will need to gather sufficiently representative views to secure robust results.

Methodology

Methodology Summary

Suggested Methodology (main methodology)	Online survey Face to face interviews Workshop secretariat and report
Any other specific requirements	The sample will need to take account of <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Funders• Institution type and size• Researchers including discipline and career stage• Sector bodies The bidder is asked to propose an appropriate allocation of resource to each stakeholder group. It is expected that there will be up to 30 hours of face to face interviews and a minimum of 1000 responses to the online survey will be achieved
Project completion date	Final report 23/05/2016

Main Methodological description

Bidders are asked to design a mixed methodology consisting of qualitative interviews and quantitative surveying and incorporating to outcomes of 3 workshops which will be managed by HEFCE. It is expected that the majority of the research will consist of 'new' fieldwork, with minimal time expended on the exploration of current literature. We envisage that a project would include elements of work as outlined in the table below- Please note the phases are overlapping and bidders should clearly demonstrate how they will resource each phase.

Stage	Description of research phases
Phase 1 Late January 2016- Early March 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Development and delivery of online survey of researchers and stakeholders and results synthesis (minimum of 4 weeks fieldwork).• HEFCE sign off of online survey W/C 8th February 2016
Phase 2 Late February Late March 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provide secretariat to three workshops and write a summary of the outcome of each workshop using the findings to inform both the final report and the selection of interviewees for the next stage of the research. The write ups should form a single annex to the final report. 1) Strategic Leaders

	<p>2) Funding Stakeholders</p> <p>3) Researchers</p> <p>Use the workshops to identify a selection of individuals to undertake in-depth interviews- with a focus on researchers of different disciplines and career stages (Maximum 30).</p>
<p>Phase 3</p> <p>Late March –</p> <p>Late May 2016</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Undertake in depth interviews (interview script HEFCE sign off w/c 21st March) • Synthesis of results and report writing • Final report for HEFCE sign off

Research questions

The contractor should design and implement a research study to examine What barriers and incentives to IDR are present in the UK HE research and funding culture? taking account of the full range of stakeholders including research funders. Some of the areas below are directly linked to a previous study published in June 2015 *A review of the UK's interdisciplinary research using a citation-based approach*⁵ (further details available in Background). We will also expect the tenderer to suggest questions to us that might need to be examined in the work and/or may arise from the information gathered, as deemed appropriate.

- What is the current position of IDR with regard to disciplinary groups building on the findings of *A review of the UK's interdisciplinary research using a citation-based approach*.
- What factors might contribute to the lower than expected volume of IDR submitted to the REF?
- What sources of funding are available for IDR?
- Assess the role of IDR in research funding and higher education policies
- What is the role of IDR in institutions research and knowledge exchange strategies?
- How do policies on reward, career progression and internal research funding support IDR?
- Exploring the role of collaboration in IDR with non HE partners

Researchers are expected to consider the influence of the distance between disciplines when considering questions of IDR success, failure and barriers and incentives.

⁵ <http://www.hefce.ac.uk/pubs/rereports/Year/2015/interdisc/Title,104883,en.html>

Deliverables

The external contractor will be expected to deliver the following mandatory key deliverables:

- Statement of work at commencement of the project outlining the work activities they will undertake, deliverables and timetable. This will be discussed and refined at the inception meeting which will be held 25/01/16 in London/Bristol
- Project plan c/w milestones and risk assessment with levels of risk with owners identified and mitigating actions to address
- Research instruments e.g. Survey
- Write up of workshops- the outcomes of the workshops should feed into the overall assessment.
- Interview question scripts
- Full draft report for review and sign off by HEFCE
- A final report for review and sign off by HEFCE
- Attendance at minimum three project board meetings (either in Bristol or London) to coincide with key project milestones
- Weekly progress reports by email or telephone as required which may include outcomes of early analysis and updates to risk register
- The contractor will be expected to be regular in communication which will include email, telephone and face to face meetings as required, with the HEFCE Project Manager to ensure that objectives and milestones are being met and that the project is progressing as expected in terms of scope and time and to ensure that any potential issues or risks are identified, monitored and managed appropriately through an update of the risk register.
- Copies of original anonymised quantitative data files- e.g. survey responses

The report should include:

- An executive summary
- Literature review including clear definitions of 'multidisciplinary', 'interdisciplinary,' 'cross-disciplinary' and 'transdisciplinary'
- Method including the use of a clearly defined set of discipline categories
- Analysis
- Conclusions including clear articulation of the barriers and opportunities facing IDR
- List of interviewees
- Glossary (if appropriate)
- Original data file (if appropriate)

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, the Customer and any specific external stakeholders UK SBS deem required. After evaluation the 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 ($5+5+6=16\div3=5.33$))

Pass / fail criteria		
Questionnaire	Q No.	Question subject
Commercial	FOI1.1	Freedom of Information Exemptions
Commercial	AW1.1	Form of Bid
Commercial	AW1.3	Certificate of Bona Fide Bid
Commercial	AW3.1	Validation check
Commercial	AW4.1	Contract Terms
Price	AW5.5	E Invoicing
Price	AW5.6	Implementation of E-Invoicing
Quality	AW6.1	Compliance to the Specification
-	-	Invitation to Quote – received on time within e-sourcing tool

Scoring criteria

Evaluation Justification Statement

In consideration of this particular requirement UK SBS has decided to evaluate Potential Providers by adopting the weightings/scoring mechanism detailed within this ITQ. UK SBS 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	20.00%
Quality	PROJ1.1	Understanding the HE Sector	10.00%
Quality	PROJ1.2	Understanding of Requirement and Objectives	14.80%
Quality	PROJ1.3	Methodology – Method statement including a risk register for this project	25.20%
Quality	PROJ1.4	Project Team - who will deliver this project	20.00%
Quality	PROJ1.5	Project Plan c/w milestones and Specifications	10.00%

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: Score/Total Points available multiplied by 20 ($60/100 \times 20 = 12$)

Where an evaluation criterion is worth 10% then the 0-100 score achieved will be multiplied by 10.

Example if a Bidder scores 60 from the available 100 points this will equate to 6% by using the following calculation: Score/Total Points available multiplied by 10 ($60/100 \times 10 = 6$)

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 selection 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 the final score returned may be different as there may be multiple evaluators and their individual scores will be averaged (mean) to determine your final score.

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 $(60+60+40+40) \div 4 = 50$

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: 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.

Section 6 – Evaluation questionnaire

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

Guidance on completion of the questionnaire 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.
- 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 Emptoris messaging system to raise any clarifications to our ITQ. You should note that typically 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 your customer is and what they want – a generic answer does not necessarily meet every customer'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 and concise 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 check and recheck your Bid before dispatch.

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

DO NOT

- 7.12 Do not cut and paste from a previous document and forget to change the previous details such as the previous buyer's name.
- 7.13 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.
- 7.14 Do not share the Procurement documents, they are confidential and should not be shared with anyone without the Buyers written permission.
- 7.15 Do not seek to influence the procurement process by requesting meetings or contacting UK SBS or the Customer to discuss your Bid. If your Bid requires clarification the Buyer will contact you.
- 7.16 Do not contact any UK SBS staff or Customer staff without the Buyers written permission or we may reject your Bid.
- 7.17 Do not collude to fix or adjust the price or withdraw your Bid with another Party as we will reject your Bid.
- 7.18 Do not offer UK SBS or Customer staff any inducement or we will reject your Bid.
- 7.19 Do not seek changes to the Bid after responses have been submitted and the deadline for Bids to be submitted has passed.
- 7.20 Do not cross reference answers to external websites or other parts of your Bid, the cross references and website links will not be considered.
- 7.21 Do not exceed word counts, the additional words will not be considered.
- 7.22 Do not make your Bid conditional on acceptance of your own Terms of Contract, as your Bid will be rejected.

Some additional guidance notes

- 7.23 All enquiries with respect to access to the e-sourcing tool and problems with functionality within the tool may be submitted to Crown Commercial Service (previously Government Procurement Service), Telephone 0345 010 3503.
- 7.24 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.
- 7.25 Question numbering is not sequential and all questions which require submission are included in the Section 6 Evaluation Questionnaire.
- 7.26 Any Contract offered may not guarantee any volume of work or any exclusivity of supply.
- 7.27 We do not guarantee to award any Contract as a result of this procurement
- 7.28 All documents issued or received in relation to this procurement shall be the property of UK SBS.
- 7.29 We can amend any part of the procurement documents at any time prior to the latest date / time Bids shall be submitted through Emptoris.
- 7.30 If you are a Consortium you must provide details of the Consortiums structure.
- 7.31 Bidders will be expected to comply with the Freedom of Information Act 2000 or your Bid will be rejected.
- 7.32 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
- 7.33 Your bid will be valid for 60 days or your Bid will be rejected.
- 7.34 Bidders may only amend the Contract terms if you can demonstrate there is a legal or statutory reason why you cannot accept them. If you request changes to the Contract and UK SBS fail to accept your legal or statutory reason is reasonably justified we may reject your Bid.
- 7.35 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.
- 7.36 If you fail mandatory pass / fail criteria we will reject your Bid.
- 7.37 Bidders are required to use IE8, IE9, Chrome or Firefox in order to access the functionality of the Emptoris e-sourcing tool.

- 7.38 Bidders should note that if they are successful with their proposal UK SBS 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 UK SBS may decline to proceed with the award of the Contract to the successful Bidder.
- 7.39 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 Emptoris.
- 7.40 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, UK SBS 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 UK SBS 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.

- 7.41 From 2nd April 2014 the Government is introducing its new Government Security Classifications (GSC) classification scheme 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 from 2nd April 2014. The link below to the Gov.uk website provides information on the new GSC:

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

UK SBS 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

- [Emptoris Training Guide](#)
- [Emptoris e-sourcing tool](#)
- [Contracts Finder](#)
- [Tenders Electronic Daily](#)
- [Equalities Act introduction](#)
- [Bribery Act introduction](#)
- [Freedom of information Act](#)