

Request for Proposal



Request for Proposal (RFP) on behalf of UK Research and Innovation (UKRI)

Subject: Evaluation of the UKRI Strategic Priorities Fund (SPF)

Sourcing Reference Number: UK SBS CR20033

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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 Contracting Authorities improve efficiency, generate savings and modernise. It is our vision to become the leading service provider for 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 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 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 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 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>

For details on how the Contracting Authority protect and process your personal data please follow the link below:

<https://www.ukri.org/privacy-notice/>

Section 2 – About the Contracting Authority

UK Research and Innovation

Operating across the whole of the UK and with a combined budget of more than £6 billion, UK Research and Innovation represents the largest reform of the research and innovation funding landscape in the last 50 years.

As an independent non-departmental public body UK Research and Innovation brings together the seven Research Councils (AHRC, BBSRC, EPSRC, ESRC, MRC, NERC, STFC) plus Innovate UK and a new organisation, Research England.

UK Research and Innovation ensures the UK maintains its world-leading position in research and innovation. This is done by creating the best environment for research and innovation to flourish.

For more information, please visit: www.ukri.org

Section 3 – Working with the Contracting Authority.

Section 3 – Contact details		
3.1.	Contracting Authority Name and address	UK Research and Innovation of, Polaris House, Swindon, SN2 1FL
3.2.	Buyer	Victoria Clewer
3.3.	Buyer contact details	Research@uksbs.co.uk 01793 867000
3.4.	Maximum value of the Opportunity	The Maximum value of the opportunity is £900,000.00 ex VAT
3.5.	Process for the submission of clarifications and Bids	All correspondence shall be submitted within the Messaging Centre of the e-sourcing tool. Guidance Notes to support the use of Delta eSourcing are 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 posting of Contract advert to OJEU.	Wednesday 22 nd April 2020
3.7.	Date RFP available to Bidders on Contracts Finder	Monday 27 th April 2020
3.8.	Latest date / time RFP clarification questions shall be received through Delta eSourcing messaging system	Wednesday 20 th May 2020 at 14:00
3.9.	Latest date / time RFP clarification answers should be sent to all Bidders by the Buyer through Delta eSourcing Portal	Thursday 21 st May 2020 at 14:00
3.10.	Closing date and time for Bidder to request RFP documents	Friday, 19 th June 2020 at 11:00
3.11.	Closing date and time for Bidder to submit their response (' the deadline ').	Monday 22 nd June 2020 at 11:00
3.12.	Date/time Bidders should be available for interview	Week commencing 6 th July 2020
3.13.	Notification of proposed Contract award to unsuccessful bidders	Friday 17 th July 2020
3.14.	Anticipated Contract Award Date	Thursday, 30 th July 2020
3.15.	Commencement of Contract	Monday, 3 rd August 2020
3.16.	Completion of Contract	31 st December 2025
3.17.	Bid Validity Period	90 Days

Section 4 – Specification and about this procurement

Background

1. About the National Productivity Investment Fund

- a. As set out in the Industrial Strategy, the Government allocated £7bn to the National Productivity Investment Fund (NPIF) over the period 2017/19 to 2021/22. Split between themes, the NPIF funding package balances both discovery-led and challenge-based research and innovation.

2. The UKRI Strategic Priorities Fund (SPF)

- a. Paul Nurse's 2016 review of the seven UK Research Councils was a major driver behind the creation of UKRI. Within the UK's world class R&D system, Nurse's report identified a number of weaknesses with current funding mechanisms; chiefly that they did not support multi- and inter-disciplinary research (MIDRI¹) and there wasn't funding to respond to emerging strategic opportunities, whether identified by research/innovation communities or other government departments (OGDs).
- b. The Strategic Priorities Fund (SPF) is a new competitive funding scheme that funds:
 - i. Multi- and inter-disciplinary research and innovation (MIDRI);
 - ii. Research and innovation that crosses the boundaries between the nine UKRI Councils and Other Governmental Departments (OGDs) to address Government research and innovation priorities; and
 - iii. Strategically important research and innovation that cannot be supported through other mechanisms. This will include:
 - Medium-scale projects which are typically too large to be funded through a Research Council / Innovate UK award, but not large enough to constitute an Industrial Strategy Challenge Fund (ISCF) 'grand challenge'.
 - Emerging opportunities that are not aligned to specific ISCF challenges but are strategically important.
- c. Prospective schemes seeking funding must meet at least one of these overarching themes/objectives. The criteria used to assess this is set out in Paragraph 4.

3. Background

- a. *Multi-disciplinary and inter-disciplinary research and innovation (MIDRI)*
- b. There are a number of reasons for why MIDRI can deliver benefits that single field research cannot. The nature of the problems research and innovation are tackling become more complex over time. A MIDRI approach is needed to address many of the challenges that society will face over time. Research and innovation can be made more rigorous by bringing together researchers and innovators from different fields or sectors with different skills. Indeed, the variety of approaches taken can increase the probability of solving complex problems.
- c. There are a number of barriers to MIDRI which have been identified that the SPF is intended to address, including:
 - i. Researchers and funding bodies often tend to identify problems from a single-discipline angle, which can affect the framing of programmes, and hinder the identification of appropriate partners from other disciplines and the communication and language between researchers from different disciplines;
 - ii. Risk aversion in bringing forward MIDRI proposals as they can require greater work and cost to develop because the peer review process is extremely competitive. MIDRI proposals are more likely to be novel and untested;

¹ Defined internally as follows: multi-disciplinary research or innovation involving two or more separate disciplines or sectors, whereas inter-disciplinary research or innovation integrates insights and perspectives from more than one disciplinary [or sector] standpoint.

- iii. Assessments of MIDRI require a wider range of reviewer expertise, which is lacking in the current system, leading to a bias towards single disciplinary projects;
 - iv. A lack of MIDRI remit in the UK (according to the Higher Education Funding Council England (HEFCE) landscape review of inter-disciplinary research in the UK); and
 - v. A perception that MIDRI projects were less likely to be funded (2016 Landscape Review).
- d. *Cross-Government R&D priorities*
- e. The National Audit Office's 2017 report on cross-government funding of R&D identified the need for greater leadership, coordination and priority setting, particularly in less mature areas of research and technology. It clearly identified UKRI as being well-positioned to drive improvements. Similarly, the Nurse review emphasised that interactions between research leaders in Government Departments and Research Councils are currently ad hoc and of variable quality, and that the "Research Councils and Government need to do more to create the most favourable circumstances for these conversations to develop".
 - f. The creation of UKRI is expected to act as a catalyst to ensure that a proper understanding of departments' R&D requirements informs funding decisions. It is also expected to help to breakdown artificial barriers to cooperation and foster coordination and collaboration to support cross-Government coordination of research priorities. The SPF aims to provide a mechanism to ensure that OGD research priorities inform funding decisions in two ways:
 - i. UKRI will work with OGDs to draw up a list of key Government priorities. Bidders into the SPF were and are encouraged to consider submitting proposals that meet these priorities.
 - ii. Where Councils or other bodies use SPF funding to run a competitive call, other Departments' Public Sector Research Establishments (PSREs) are eligible to bid for competitive funding alongside universities, businesses and research establishments.
- g. *Flexibility and agility of the research and innovation funding system to respond to strategic priorities and opportunities*
- h. The Nurse review concluded that the current funding system lacked the flexibility to respond to emerging issues and priorities. This is in large part due to the fact that investment in research and innovation has long lead-in times, with funding committed or earmarked significantly in advance of expenditure, leaving funders with little flexibility to respond to developing opportunities. The SPF will, therefore, aim to provide the mechanism necessary to create agility in the system.
 - i. In addition to supporting emerging opportunities, there is a further gap in the current system in relation to support for medium scale projects; that is, projects which are typically too large to be funded through a Research Council / Innovate UK award, but not large enough to constitute an ISCF 'grand challenge'.

4. Objectives

- a. **The high-level objectives of the SPF are to:**
- b. [Objective 1] Drive an increase in high-quality MIDRI
 - i. De-risk the process of preparing/submitting MIDRI proposals for the research and innovation community
 - ii. Improve the efficacy of the funding system in assessing MIDRI proposals
- c. [Objective 2] Ensure that UKRI's investments link up effectively with cross-departmental research and innovation priorities and opportunities
 - i. Improve join up across Departments to establish consensus on key Government priorities for R&D
 - ii. Increase understanding of Government priorities among research and innovation funders
 - iii. Improve the ability of the R&D funding system to deliver cross-Government R&D priorities through enabling PSREs to bid for open competitions funded through the SPF
- d. [Objective 3] Ensure the system is able to respond to strategic priorities and opportunities
 - i. Provide a funding route for high quality medium scale projects

- ii. Improve the agility of the funding system to respond to emerging opportunities

5. Successful SPF programmes

- a. The SPF consists of a diverse range of research and innovation activities at various stages of maturity. For each wave of the SPF, to proceed to the assessment panel, each proposed SPF programme had to meet at least one of the three stated objectives. The table below provides an overview of the breakdown of the 34 SPF programmes across waves 1 and 2 which met each objective (as defined by the measures for selection in Paragraph 4).

	Number of selected proposals				Proportion of lifetime spend			
	Objective 1	Objective 2	Objective 3	Total	Objective 1	Objective 2	Objective 3	Total
Wave 1	13	13	11	15	76%	94%	82%	40%
Wave 2	16	17	9	19	89%	90%	50%	60%
Total	29	30	20	34	83%	91%	63%	100%

- b. The measures of success for each of these objectives were as follows:
- Objective 1: programmes with one or more partner bidding organisations.
 - Objective 2: a letter of support from one or more Chief Scientific Advisers (CSAs) offering policy and/or governance support.
 - Objective 3: bidding organisations identified proposals which meet this objective at proposal stage. This factored into the SPF assessment panel's evaluation of each bid.
- c. Below are two tables containing details of programmes across Wave 1 and Wave 2 respectively, denoting each programmes' lead Councils and partner organisations, the indicative size of UKRI's funding commitments for each programme over its lifetime, a short summary of the programme, and which overarching programme objective they are linked to. The total lifetime cost of the two waves' component programmes is £0.83bn, with £0.33bn in Wave 1 and £0.5bn in Wave 2.

Wave 1 SPF Programmes						
Programme name	Summary	Lead Council	Partner Council	Government Department Partners	Link to SPF objective(s)	Lifetime cost (£m)
Transforming Productivity Research	A suite of projects to investigate the drivers of productivity growth and understand how these can be manipulated to improve economic growth and living standards.	ESRC	EPSRC and MRC.	DHSC, DWP and BEIS	1,2,3	8.9
UK Population Lab	One year's funding to scope work on a new Population Lab, including a new "spine" for handling administrative data, and a new birth cohort for longitudinal studies.	ESRC	EPSRC, MRC, NERC.	DWP and DHSC	1,2,3	2.1
Analysis for Innovators	Business-led collaborations (including matched funding) to address low productivity by providing businesses with measurement and analysis capability. Builds on a successful pilot.	IUK	NPL and STFC.	None.	1,3	14.1
Human Cell Atlas	Competitive funding for research groups with the joint aim of mapping every type of cell in the human body. The UK's contribution to an international collaboration led by Harvard/MIT and the Sanger	MRC	EPSRC and IUK.	None.	1,3	6.8

	Institute.					
Living with Machines	A call to fund research into the social and cultural impact of the Industrial Revolution via collaboration between humanities researchers, data scientists, and other researchers.	AHRC	None.	DCMS	1,2,3	9.3
UK Animal and Plant Health	A call to fund research into plant pathogens. A first wave to be delivered by the John Innes Centre, focussing on <i>Xylella fastidiosa</i> ; second wave wider in scope. <i>Xylella</i> and similar pathogens pose a severe risk to food production, the horticultural industry, and urban and rural landscapes.	BBSRC	NERC.	DEFRA and Scottish Gov	1,2,3	17.7
AI and Data Science for Engineering, Health, and Government	A multi-strand proposal to bring AI to bear on: digital twinning; healthcare; science and engineering; and the justice system. Delivered via the Alan Turing Institute.	EPSRC	BBSRC, ESRC, MRC, NERC, STFC.	DEFRA, Home Office, BEIS, DfT, DHSC	1,2,3	38.8
Ensuring the Security of Digital Technologies at the Periphery	Funding for researchers and industrial "demonstrators" to address security weaknesses in the Internet of Things by combining cyber and physical security with behavioural studies.	EPSRC	AHRC, ESRC, IUK.	DCMS and Home Office	1,2,3	30.6
Physics of Life	A proposal to address the traditional divide between physics and life sciences, which presents a major obstacle to research into subjects ranging from cancer to antimicrobial resistance. This project will fund collaborative projects between physicists and biologists, building on the existing Physics of Life network.	EPSRC	BBSRC and MRC.	BEIS	1,2,3	31.2
Clean Air: Analysis and Solutions	A portfolio of investments to improve UK capacity to understand and address low air quality. This addresses the current lack of cohesion in the current air quality community, building an interdisciplinary network which will move on from "easy wins" to new research and innovation challenges.	Met Office / NERC	EPSRC, ESRC, IUK, MRC, NPL.	DEFRA, DfT, and DHSC	1,2	19.6
UK Climate Resilience	A set of calls across three related themes to understand how UK society and economy can be made resilient to climate change. Previous efforts have focussed on improving our ability to measure and forecast climate change; this project builds on that to understand the changes in behaviour, innovation, and government strategy required to address this change.	Met Office / NERC	EPSRC, ESRC.	DEFRA	1,2	18.7
Constructing a Digital Environment	A project to improve environmental modelling by constructing a sensor network and augmenting analytical and visualisation capability	NERC	EPSRC.	DEFRA	1,2	10.4

Landscape Decisions	A project to deliver a new prototype landscape-scale decision-making framework that will be developed under future activities, by developing new approaches and building communities.	NERC	BBSRC and EPSRC.	DEFRA	1,2	10.3
EMBL-EBI	Investment in new IT facilities for the European Bioinformatics Institute. The EBI is the world leader in the analysis, storage, and dissemination of biological data. The new facilities will allow the EBI to maximise the opportunities provided by AI and be more open to collaboration with business.	BBSRC	MRC	Chief Medical Officer	1,2,3	44.5
Extreme Photonics Application Centre	A new facility incorporating a novel laser-driven radiation technique with applications in medicine, defence, and industry. The facility will put the UK at the cutting edge of the field.	STFC	None.	MoD	1,2,3	71.2

Wave 2 SPF Programmes						
Programme name	Summary	Lead Council	Partner Council	Government Department Partners	Link to SPF objective(s)	Lifetime cost (£m)
The Advanced Pain Discovery Platform: Mapping the complexity of chronic pain	A collaboration with Versus Arthritis to fund charities and commercial partners which can shed new light on the mechanisms of pain and how and why there is so much variety in its lived experience.	MRC	BBSRC; IUK; ESRC	None.	1,2,3	12.0
Tackling multimorbidity at scale: Unpicking disease clustering biological pathways and trajectories	Funding for open research calls to move away from a one-disease, one mechanism approach and explore disease "clusters" that make up multimorbidity (the concurrence of two or more health conditions in an individual) and how they are caused. Findings will be consolidated in a multimorbidity databank.	MRC	ESRC	DHSC.	1,2	10.0
Policy and Evidence Centre for Modern Slavery and Human Rights	Employing researchers to carry out commissioned work and issue open research calls to tackle Modern Slavery within a new Policy and Evidence Centre.	AHRC	ESRC	The Home Office	1,2,3	10.0
UK Centre of Evidence Implementation in Adult Social Care	This project will offer an open call to deliver a UK Centre of Evidence Implementation which should drive improvements in social care practice and help prevent escalation of need.	ESRC	None.	DHSC, Welsh Govt, Scottish Govt, N. Irish Govt, MHCLG and Cabinet	1,2	7.5

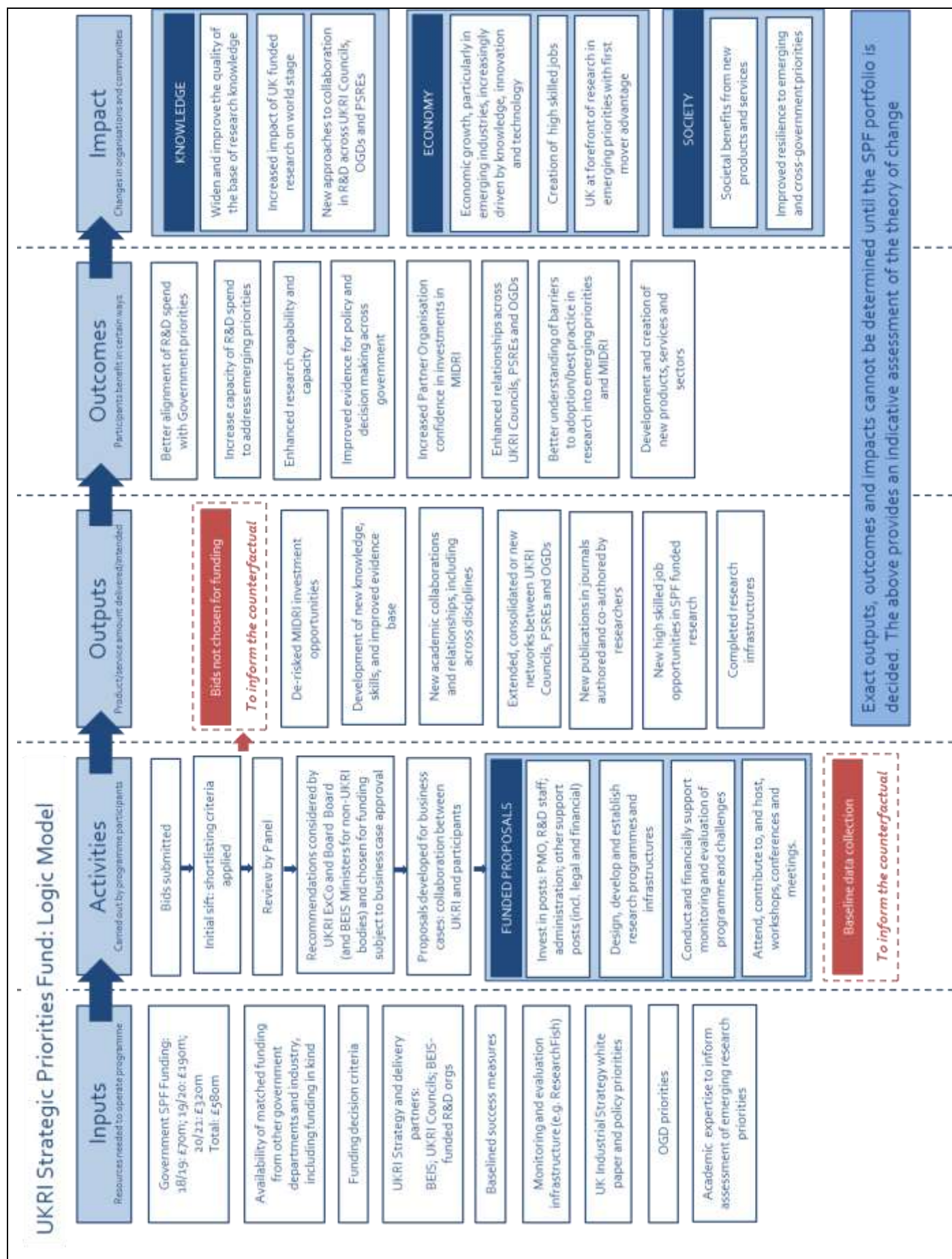
				Office		
Sustainable Management of UK Marine Resources	A research call for proposals to understand the importance to the economy and to society of different components of marine natural capital and the services they underpin, enabling more comprehensive evaluation of the trade-off potential under different management scenarios, and identifying interventions that will improve the marine environment and produce sustainable and resilient outcomes.	NERC	ESRC	Defra and Scottish Govt	1,2	12.4
Space Weather Innovation, Measurement Modelling and Risk (SWIMMR)	Commissioned research and open calls designed to provide a strategic UK approach to Space Weather, transitioning research into operations, according to user needs. This includes advancing UK understanding of the risks of Space Weather and mitigating actions which can be taken.	STFC	NERC; Met Office	BEIS, MoD and DfT.	1,2,3	20.0
Towards a National Collection: Opening UK Heritage to the World	A suite of commissioned and open call research projects designed to improve access to AHRC's Independent Research Organisation's archives and collections, building towards a unified virtual 'national collection'.	AHRC	<i>None.</i>	DCMS	1,2	18.9
Nucleic Acid Therapy Accelerator (NATA)	A challenge-led R&D programme based around the delivery and synthesis of nucleic acid medicines.	MRC	<i>None.</i>	DHSC and Office for Life Sciences (BEIS).	1,2	30.0
National Timing Centre	This programme will deliver the world's first demonstration testbed of a resilient distributed national time scale traceable to global standards along with mechanisms to support the early adopters and those exploring new technologies. It will also act as a blueprint for a future resilient timing infrastructure in the UK.	NPL	IUK	MoD, BEIS and DfT	1,2,3	30.3
Quantum Sensors for Fundamental Physics (QSFP)	Research calls for cross-disciplinary consortia to develop quantum sensor technology and train the next generation of researchers, engineers and scientists.	STFC	EPSRC; UKSA; NPL	<i>None.</i>	1,2	40.0
Protecting Citizens Online	A research hub which will issue research calls and deliver knowledge and tools to mitigate four important categories of online harm: privacy abuses and inappropriate uses of personal data; malign influence and disinformation; online fraud and fake identity; cyber-bullying and harassment.	EPSRC	ESRC; AHRC	DCMS, Home Office and National Security	1,2,3	18.3
Clean Air: Future	Research grants and business-led competitions to explore the effects and mechanisms of air pollution	NERC + Met	Met Office;	Defra, Scottish	1,2	22.0

Challenges	indoors.	Office	IUK; ESRC; EPSRC; MRC; STFC; NPL	Govt, Welsh Govt, DHSC and DfT		
National Interdisciplinary Circular Economy Research Programme	Research grants designed to build a multidisciplinary research community that can take a systems view of resource flows (e.g. those within the food, water or textiles sectors) to assess risks and benefits associated with the circular economy and make recommendations that inform policy making and accelerate change.	EPSRC	NERC; AHRC; ESRC	Defra	1,2,3	30.0
Trustworthy Autonomous Systems	This investment will fund a new research hub and surrounding nodes to drive forward cross-disciplinary fundamental research into the design, development, curation, verification and validation of autonomous systems to enable trust, and to ensure that they are safe, reliable, resilient, and ethical. This is an important step to de-risk this emerging technology.	EPSRC	IUK; STFC; AHRC	National Security, MoD, DCMS and DfT	1,2,3	33.9
Greenhouse Gas Removal Demonstrators	This proposal will provide a world leading research and innovation programme that will establish greenhouse gas removal (GGR) demonstrator facilities. These will demonstrate the effectiveness, cost, and limitations of large-scale GGR. Findings will be integrated by a Directorate Hub, which will also provide underpinning research to address the business, environmental, social, ethical, and governance issues, and support the progress of GGR technologies to readiness.	NERC	AHRC; BBSRC; ESRC; EPSRC; IUK	BEIS and Defra.	1,2	31.5
Adolescence, Mental Health and the Developing Mind	A programme of workshops and open research calls designed to better understand the developing adolescent mind, how internal and external factors shape it and how this impacts on lifelong mental health, educational attainment, identity, social relationships and behaviour.	MRC	AHRC; ESRC	DfE, DCMS and Welsh Govt.	1,2	35.0
Harnessing Exascale Computing: 'Exascale Computing Algorithms and Infrastructure Benefiting UK Research' (ExCALIBUR)	A collection of commissioned research and competitive tenders to ensure future simulation codes and algorithms are resilient enough to work with and use advanced supercomputer architecture.	Met Office + EPSRC	EPSRC; STFC; UKAEA; NERC; MRC	MoD	1,2,3	45.8
Transforming Productivity: National Institute of Excellence	The institute will provide a convening hub for wider research as well as undertaking its own research, bespoke analysis and evaluations to understand what action is required to solve the UK's productivity challenges. Central to the institute's capability will be designing and testing interventions: translating	ESRC	IUK; NPL	HMT, BEIS and DWP.	1,2	42.2

	findings and scaling-up solutions in direct collaboration with business and policy-makers.					
A food systems approach for healthy people and a healthy planet	Competitive research calls for consortia to take a 'farm to fork' systems approach to food production, understanding nutrition needs within society and how to meet them through environmentally friendly food production.	BBSRC	MRC; NERC; ESRC	Defra, DHSC and FSA	1,2,3	47.0

6. The SPF logic model

- a. Below is the logic model for the SPF. We expect the successful bidder to review the logic model as a deliverable within the planning phase (see paragraph 22), and to consider how to develop it to add a more granular level of detail to make it more relevant to the specific projects that have been funded.



Aims and Objectives of the Project

7. Aim of this commission.

- a. UKRI is committed to rigorous evaluation of all our key programmes, including the SPF. UKRI would like to commission an independent evaluation of our investments in the SPF Waves 1 and 2 portfolio.
- b. The aim of the evaluation is to inform ongoing and future improvements of the fund, to maximise the value of public funding (in particular, the possibility of future growth of the SPF), to demonstrate what the fund delivered for taxpayers, and to help UKRI build the evidence base on 'what works' in successfully supporting high-quality MIDRI (R&I) and ensuring R&I responds to strategic opportunities and priorities.

8. Evaluation questions

- a. The evaluation questions have been developed with the SPF objectives and long-term impacts in mind, to support continuity in future SPF evaluations and help to progressively build the evidence base.
- b. As set out in paragraph 17.c, the expectation is that between five and ten case studies will be conducted. These case studies should be selected on the basis that they will maximise our evidence base, reflecting the diversity of delivery approaches within the SPF portfolio. These should seek to address relevant evaluation questions from the table below, alongside an assessment of whether, and the extent to which, the selected programmes have met their stated objectives.

Key evaluation questions	Sub evaluation questions
Appropriateness questions – The process evaluation	
To what extent, and how, is the SPF working and being delivered as intended?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What were the challenges, facilitators and barriers to implementing and delivering the SPF and its component programmes, if any? - What is the range of reported experiences of researchers, innovators and other delivery partners in delivering SPF-funded programmes and projects? - What, in practice, is felt to be working more or less well regarding the delivery of the fund (or programme) by UKRI and the SPF Oversight Board, and why? - What potential lessons are there for future waves / similar funds? - (To what extent) did the allocation of funding between Waves 1 and 2, and the timing, affect the ability to deliver the best quantity and quality of programmes for the SPF portfolio? - In allocating SPF funding to specific programmes, how did UKRI use/interpret the overarching objectives of the SPF to identify which programmes were of the highest priority? Was this approach to funding research and innovation a success in terms of maximising the fund's impact?
To what extent (and how) has the SPF supported an increase in high quality MIDRI?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To what extent, and how, has the SPF increased the efficacy of the funding system and the effectiveness of the peer-review process to better assess MIDRI bids? - To what extent, and how, has the SPF de-risked the process of preparing and submitting MIDRI proposals for the research and innovation community? - To what extent, and how, has the SPF encouraged further MIDRI projects and programmes, and a shift in research institutions towards this type of activity?
To what extent, and how, has the SPF improved the link between UKRI's investments and cross-departmental research	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To what extent, and how, has the SPF improved join up across Departments to establish consensus on key Government priorities for R&D? - To what extent, and how, has the SPF increased understanding of Government priorities among research and innovation funders? - To what extent, and how, has the SPF increased investments in projects which further the

and innovation priorities and opportunities?	<p>objectives of government departments and facilitated more effective alignment between R&D strategies?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To what extent, and how, has the SPF improved the ability of the R&D funding system to deliver cross-Government R&D priorities through enabling PSREs to bid for open competitions funded through the SPF?
To what extent, and how, has the SPF ensured that the research and innovation system is able to respond to strategic priorities and opportunities?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To what extent, and how, has the SPF increased high-quality R&D in areas where gaps currently exist? - To what extent, and how, has the SPF increased engagement with research and innovation communities to identify emerging priorities, and provided a sufficient investment to address these opportunities? - To what extent, and how, has the SPF improved: (i) the funding route for high quality medium scale programmes? and (ii) the agility of the funding system to respond to emerging opportunities?
Effectiveness questions – The impact (and economic) evaluation	
To what extent, and how, has the SPF delivered economic, knowledge and societal impact?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What has been the wider, overall economic impact of the SPF, including the economic value of non-market impacts? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o To what extent, and how, has the SPF succeeded in increasing long-term investment in research and development, including the leveraging of third-party investment? How much has materialised? If not, why not? o To what extent, and how, have SPF programmes resulted in the creation of high skilled jobs, improved skills, or increased the overall number of jobs? o To what extent, and how, has the SPF driven improvements in business performance, turnover and productivity? - What has been the wider, overall impact of the SPF on the state of knowledge, both in the UK and internationally? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o To what extent has the SPF driven the creation of new knowledge, such as new research publications, Intellectual Property (IP), Technology-Readiness-Level (TRL) and Manufacturing-Readiness-Level (MRL) advancement, process and conceptual innovation, etc.? o What specific disciplines have collaborated through, or as a result of, the SPF, and to what end? What does this imply about the extent to which the SPF has supported or enabled high-quality MIDRI? o To what extent has the SPF fostered new approaches to collaboration across the UKRI Research Councils, Other Government Departments (OGDs) and PSREs? - What has been the wider, overall societal impact of the SPF? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o To what extent, and how, has the SPF impacted the environment, public health and wellbeing? o To what extent (and how) have SPF programmes fostered more equal, diverse and inclusive research environments?
Based on the overall, estimated impact of the SPF – considering those impacts which can be given market and non-market values – compared to the overall cost of delivering the	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To what extent does the SPF and its programmes represent value for money given overall impact on knowledge, economy and society relative to the size of the investment? - To what extent does the SPF represent value for money compared to other possible alternative ways of achieving the same impacts?

SPF, to what extent does the SPF represent value for money?	
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9. Scope of the evaluation

a. The evaluation will be at the fund-level, covering Waves 1 and 2 and their component programmes set out under Paragraph 5.

10. Evaluation budget

a. We have a maximum budget of £900k for this evaluation. The bidder is invited to propose a breakdown of costs by phase identified in paragraph 21.

11. Time period to be covered by the evaluation

a. The timeline of evaluation currently ends shortly after the completion of Wave 2 (with the exception of two programmes which may still be ongoing). However, some impacts of the programme are long term in nature. Therefore, the evaluation should highlight the evidence and outcomes and impacts realised to date, and crucially also, the prospect of future impact occurring based on progress to date and relevant (evidenced) trajectories.

12. Stakeholders to be engaged during the evaluation

a. The table below lists stakeholder groups that are likely to hold information and insights relevant to the evaluation questions. It is not expected that the contractor will necessarily engage with all these groups. The groups highlighted with an * are those which the contractor would actively need to identify. It is important that the contractor looks beyond the stakeholders listed to ensure that the evaluation is informed by a range of informed, external and objective perspectives (including those outside the SPF programmes).

Overview of SPF stakeholders	
Within SPF programmes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Programme/project/grant/activity leads and other staff working across delivery organisations for SPF-funded activities - SPF Lead (Richard Meadows) and SPF Evaluation Lead (Will Naughton) - Research Councils and other organisations hosting the programmes - Users of the research and innovation developed as a result of the SPF programme*
At UKRI	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The SPF Oversight Board - The SPF Oversight Group - SPF Evaluation Working Group - The NPIF Evaluation Oversight Board - The UKRI Strategy Committee
Wider stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - BEIS, HMT and other central Government departments - Government scientific advisors - Industry, third sector and the public*

13. Oversight and management of the research

a. The evaluation will be overseen by the SPF Monitoring and Evaluation lead, Will Naughton, reporting to the NPIF Evaluation Board and the SPF Oversight Working Group. The SPF monitoring and evaluation governance arrangements are shown below. The successful bidder will report to the SPF Monitoring and Evaluation lead:

SPF-wide evaluation



Programme A
evaluation

Programme B
evaluation

Programme C
evaluation

...

Project A1

Project A2

Project A3

Project B1

Project B2

Project B3

Project C1

Project C2

Project C3

...

Data / evidence provision

15. Ethics and governance

- a. The bidder is invited to explain how the research will be conducted in accordance with high ethical standards.

16. Data protection and security

- a. The bidder is invited to outline how the evaluation will be conducted in accordance with relevant data protection and security standards, including how they will safely store, use and destroy contact details of stakeholders, documentary sources shared about the investments during the evaluation and the other information collected as part of the evaluation.

Approach / Methodology

17. Analysis and synthesis

- a. The bidder is invited to set out proposed approaches to the analysis of data and synthesis of the evidence that are robust, systematic and ensure that all findings and conclusions are grounded in the available evidence. This includes being explicit about the limitations and evidence gaps and uncertainties.
- b. It is anticipated that this project will require a combination of analytical techniques. The proposed approach to address the evaluation questions for the process, impact and economic evaluation must set out where reliable, quantified impact estimates are expected to be achieved, and where a more qualitative or descriptive approach might be expected. These could include case studies, surveys of stakeholders or beneficiaries, in-depth interviews, data linking, econometric analysis, primary or secondary data, and industry consultations. Proposals should specify how the different analytical techniques employed are the most appropriate for each of the evaluation objectives. It may be that not all are appropriate, but it is unlikely that any one alone will be sufficient. Where theory-based techniques, such as contribution analysis, are put forward proposals must clearly set out how different analytical approaches will be combined to produce the final findings.
- c. It is expected that between five and ten case studies of funded SPF programmes will be conducted to supplement those that will be commissioning independent evaluations. Proposals should indicate the number to be conducted and what methods (i.e. the sampling approach) and tools (i.e. face to face, phone interview) are going to be implemented, taking into consideration the time and costs of the different tools. Proposals should also set out how case study findings will be analysed and presented, and the approach to selecting case studies, which should be made on the basis of maximising our evidence base for the future running of the SPF and

similar funds.

- d. For survey activity, proposals should indicate the type of survey to be implemented, and indicate the number required or expected sample size, as well as their strategies to achieve this and steps which will be taken if it is not achieved. This includes methods and approaches to capture and ensure the maximum response rate possible.
- e. Where possible, it is anticipated that the successful proposal will make use of one or more appropriate counterfactuals. Proposals should set out the population of any counterfactual that will be used, and why this represents the most appropriate control group(s), including the approach to baselining the SPF.
- f. The SPF is a diverse portfolio of programmes with different themes and funding bodies. As such, it is anticipated that analysis of the portfolio may need to be segmented. The bidder is invited to explain how common themes and cross-cutting lessons will be drawn together.
- g. The evaluation should be undertaken in line with the broad principles set out in the Government's overarching appraisal, evaluation and quality-assurance frameworks as represented by the Green, Magenta and Aqua books. More detailed evaluation guidance includes the BEIS Science Capital Appraisal Framework and the UKRI Monitoring and Evaluation Framework. Proposals should clearly outline their plan for estimating deadweight, displacement, leakages and spill overs, in this context. Each of these factors must be individually addressed in proposals. It will not be considered sufficient for bidders to rely on general estimates drawn from the wider literature.
- h. Bidders are encouraged to think innovatively in terms of how they propose to address the evaluation objectives, although innovation should not be to the detriment of robustness. The funding partners are keen to push boundaries in their evaluations to improve the quality of their evidence base.

18. Challenges for the evaluation

- a. There are number of known challenges facing the SPF Evaluation from the outset, which will require careful consideration because they are complex for the reasons below. The bidder is invited to suggest pragmatic methods to overcome the challenges, highlighting how this has influenced the approach proposed, why it is deemed to be the most robust option, and what the limits of the approach are.
- b. **Heterogenous portfolio of programmes** – the SPF has a disparate collection of programmes which cut across a wide range of disciplines and themes, with a significant variation in the way in which they are being delivered.
- c. **Establishing the counterfactual** – i.e. what would have happened in the absence of funding – will be difficult to determine given that there are other funding routes for unsuccessful programmes within UKRI and the wider R&I system, and given the scale of the fund relative to the size of the R&I system.
- d. **Unquantifiable outcomes** – there are elements of the aims of the SPF, as set out in paragraph 4, which cannot be easily quantified.
- e. **Defining and measuring MIDRI** – as set out in more detail below in paragraph 19, MIDRI is a compound term that refers to a variety of concepts. Measuring the impact of the SPF against its MIDRI-related objectives will, therefore, be multi-faceted and potentially complex.
- f. **Low observability** – one of the primary outputs of SPF may be knowledge. While knowledge can lead to observable impacts through new products, services and processes, it is often embedded in the minds of people who worked on projects.
- g. **Attribution of impacts** – the R&D landscape is complex. There are many organisations at national and sub-national level providing a variety of support that delivery and partner organisations may interact with before, during and after SPF support.
- h. **Spill overs** – research has found that a large proportion of the overall benefits from research and innovation investments tend to be 'spill overs', i.e. the benefits to other firms and wider society that are typically hard to predict and measure.
- i. **Tracking benefits** – the impacts of SPF may be felt over a longer period, than the UKRI monitoring processes are active. This may mean that the full impacts of the SPF impact will not be fully recorded.
- j. **Self-assessment issues** – beneficiary surveys relying on funding recipients' (and wider stakeholders') responses on the impact of funding may be necessary to capture indicators that are not available. Although there is a risk

of bias (e.g. optimism and selection bias), survey design can and should mitigate against bias as much as possible.

- k. **Data sharing** – given the complex nature of the SPF, data sharing may be an issue in the evaluation, particularly given the business elements having complete and comparable data collection.
- l. **COVID-19 considerations** – the measures taken to restrict the spread of COVID-19 have had a significant operational impact upon the research and innovation community at large. We are, therefore, keen to avoid placing undue burdens on our community at this time – particularly those sectors that are focused on research and innovation to help tackle the disease itself. We want our suppliers to continue undertaking commissioned research and evaluation work, but only where this can happen without contributing to the difficulties being experienced by our community in light of COVID-19. As such, suppliers will need to consider and set out appropriate temporary measures that will be taken when undertaking surveys and/or engagement with members of the research and innovation community while these restrictions remain in place.

19. Defining and assessing MIDRI

- a. As set out in paragraph 4, one of the SPF's overarching objectives is to drive an increase in high-quality MIDRI. MIDRI can be associated with various stages of R&I activity. It can be considered from a prospective point of view (in terms of whether what we are funding aims to be MIDRI), from an activity point of view (in terms of whether the research being carried out by researchers is MIDRI), as well as a retrospective point of view (in terms of whether the outputs produced are MIDRI). To evaluate the SPF, it is likely that all these perspectives (and more) may be relevant.
- b. As set out in paragraph 5, for the purpose of assessing programmes' bids against the fund's criteria, MIDRI was assessed on the basis of whether two or more research councils or PSREs were supporting the bid. An assessment of MIDRI on this basis is therefore important, but is unlikely to offer sufficient insight in evaluating the SPF against its MIDRI objectives. We expect, therefore, that the evaluation should consider this perspective of MIDRI alongside a set of indicators, producing a more complete picture of the SPF's impact against its MIDRI objectives. We expect the evaluator to set out which MIDRI definitions and measures (quantitative and qualitative) are appropriate for the purpose of evaluation as part of their bid. The successful bidder will subsequently work with the SPF Evaluation Working Group to agree an appropriate approach to measuring and assessing MIDRI as part of the planning phase (as set out in paragraph 22).

20. Data and information to be used in the evaluation

- a. The bidder is invited to propose the data collection activities required to deliver the best evidence for the evaluation. The available fund-level data sources provided by UKRI include:
 - i. Data collected through the grants system on applications (currently the Joint electronic Submission (Je-S) form and Innovation Funding System (IFS)), including Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) characteristics.
 - ii. Budget monitoring and annual reporting.
 - iii. Data on research and innovation impacts and outcomes collected through the researchfish® and Innovate UK Awards Compliance Commercialisation (ACC) system.
 - iv. Business datasets (such as Quid and Fame) which can provide consistent data for larger companies without the need to conduct surveys.
- b. Examples of data sources, collected by the commissioned evaluation team if they found useful, include:
 - i. Surveys, interviews, workshops or focus groups with SPF board members, UKRI and BEIS stakeholders;
 - ii. Surveys, interviews, workshops or focus groups with non-UKRI partner and delivery organisations;
 - iii. Private third-party business datasets (such as Beauhurst) which can provide consistent data for smaller companies without the need to conduct surveys. The cost for accessing these should be included in the bid budget;
 - iv. Monitoring of career progression via ORCID ID and online CV data, where data allows for this;
 - v. Office for National Statistics (ONS) Business Enterprise Research and Development (BERD) and Gross Domestic Product Expenditure on R&D (GERD) data, and Organisation for Economic Cooperation and

Development (OECD) data for overseas R&D expenditure trend data. It is acknowledged that the relatively small size of SPF will be a limitation in harnessing useful data from these sources.

- vi. Other UKRI data-gathering exercises, including road mapping and other exercises for the industrial strategy, could be used for context. Most notable will be the Research Excellence Framework (REF) and Knowledge Exchange Framework (KEF) exercises, where these reference funding from the SPF.
- c. There is an expectation that independently commissioned programme-level evaluations will be conducted for programmes that meet a financial threshold of c. £20m, and/or are novel or contentious in their aims or the way in which they are being delivered. Based on this criteria, we expect that approximately five programmes will commission a full evaluation. Programmes that narrowly miss the criteria for a full evaluation will be expected to conduct an expert peer review. All programmes, regardless of their size, will participate, support and contribute to the fund-level monitoring and evaluation activities, including delivery reporting, and outcome data collection. The standard tools for monitoring research and innovation impacts and outcomes are the researchfish® and Innovate UK ACC systems.
- d. An SPF programme tracker has been developed by the SPF delivery team to monitor the quarterly progress of each SPF programme throughout its life cycle. A SPF dashboard is under development and will be linked to the programme tracker and will be used to inform the SPF Board on up to date knowledge on SPF programmes (approx. once a quarter), and to identify decisions or immediate actions required to achieve success. The dashboard will include programme-level output indicators (financial information, spend profiles, and matched funding).
- e. In all instances of data collection, the burden on respondents must be minimised as far as possible. Proposed additional data collection should build on what is already collected from funding organisations or third-parties through existing processes where possible, with any new data collection designed to fill in the gaps. The evaluation is expected to utilise data-linking, potentially including to proprietary third-party datasets. Access to these datasets should be considered and costed into proposals.
- f. The bidder is invited to set out what characteristics (e.g. sector, location, R&D intensity) will be used from the dataset for a baseline and matching a control group. How data will be collected from the sample should be explored (both treatment and control groups), including how any issues around engagement will be addressed if primary data collection is to take place.

Deliverables

21. Deliverables

- a. The evaluation is expected to be delivered over 4 phases with discrete deliverables which are outlined below. We have staggered the delivery of the evaluation reports to effectively capture evidence as we go along. Accordingly, we expect each subsequent report to add to the overall evidence base.
- b. At the end of each Phase of the evaluation, all datasets provided, compiled, or used, along with all analysis and reporting relating to them, must be provided to UKRI, such that it will be possible to hand over, in full, to contracting organisations or third parties under contract to them, for the purposes of additional research and evaluation. The contractor will also need to make all the code available to use econometric and survey data analysis. Data must be collected in such a way to enable this to happen. Proposals must state how this will be achieved, including how any data protection issues will be resolved.
- c. All milestone reports would be expected to be iterated with key stakeholders of UKRI and should include an executive summary. The successful bidder will be expected to participate in the following communication (which will be flexible according to the needs of the evaluation and milestones):
 - i. Fortnightly catch ups with the day-to-day evaluation points of contact.
 - ii. Monthly concise written progress updates to be sent (simultaneously) to the SPF Oversight Working Group and the UKRI Evaluation Team.
 - iii. Quarterly presentations including key findings and messages to support the NPIF Evaluation Oversight Board and SPF Oversight Working Group.
- d. Milestone reporting may be subject to an external, independent peer review group of evaluation experts, The

contractor will be expected to consider and, if appropriate, respond to any comments from peer reviewers and update the proposed methodology where needed, and make amendments or respond to comments before publication.

- e. All final outputs are for public dissemination. They must be professionally copy edited, produced to a high standard of layout and presentation and written in a manner accessible to a range of stakeholder audiences.

22. Phase 1: planning phase (evaluation framework)

- a. The planning phase will ensure that there is a solid foundation for the SPF evaluation by setting a robust and carefully thought-through evaluation framework, setting expectations on what can be achieved and by when, including any ongoing survey data collection and analysis to enable a robust assessment of the additional impact of the programme on inputs, activities, outputs and outcomes.
- b. This process should start with a review of the SPF Monitoring and Evaluation Plan, attached as Annex A, which should be built upon or amended as appropriate. Expected components of the (draft and later, final) evaluation framework are:
 - i. An outline of the scoping and feasibility of the evaluation, including the segmentation of the SPF programmes to successfully evaluate the objectives of the SPF evaluation;
 - ii. A stakeholder mapping and engagement plan;
 - iii. Detailed timetable for the evaluation reports, outputs and milestones;
 - iv. A risk register;
 - v. To consider, validate and refine the coverage of our proposed evaluation questions and indicators. (Having done so, propose any changes to the current set of questions and indicators that could be delivered within or, if appropriate, beyond the current budget for this evaluation that would drastically improve the level of insight gained by UKRI from the evaluation, and help the evaluation better achieve its aims);
 - vi. Validate and refine as necessary the SPF logic model, defining key success criteria, building on the material already developed and as set out in this document;
 - vii. A detailed proposed evaluation approach, including:
 - The theoretical framework
 - Identification of additional data collection required for evaluation use, and how this data will be collected
 - An outline of the options for the counterfactual(s) to best observe and capture SPF impacts
 - Proposed selection of and approach to case studies across the SPF portfolio, and how these will maximise the breadth and quality of our evidence base
 - An outline of the quantitative and qualitative research, data collection and analysis methods that will be used to conduct the evaluation
 - A clear outline of the intended approach (including specific quantitative indicators) to measure, assess and evaluate the SPF against its MIDRI objectives

23. Phase 2: baseline report

- a. The purpose of establishing a baseline is to provide a clearly defined starting point which can be used as a counterfactual scenario for the impacts of SPF (in which the research or innovation activity did not take place). It is also to understand the current funding landscape for MIDRI in the UK to facilitate a detailed comparison with changes driven by the SPF.
- b. It is expected that the baseline for the SPF will consist of multiple sources of data; as such, it will not be possible to rely solely on programme administrative data to construct a baseline. Therefore, proposals should set out what additional data is required and how it will be collected. Proposals should also consider how to capture and present this for programmes that have already commenced, i.e. collect data retrospectively.
- c. The baseline measurement will support the Final Evaluation Report. Expected components include:

- i. A description of all caveats and assumptions surrounding the evidence that forms part of the baseline report for the status of support for MIDRI within the current research and innovation system and alignment with cross-Governmental priorities (including definitions, sample size, response rate, collection method and caveats of data).
- ii. For quantitative evidence, this includes:
 - Relevant statistics capturing the state of the industry and research area of focus prior to commencement of the fund;
 - An assessment of how the industry and research area of focus is likely to evolve during, and at the end of, the delivery of the challenge;
 - For all indicators of impact/success selected to be used in the evaluation (as identified in the evaluation framework), evidence capturing the baseline 'position' against these indicators.
- iii. Where qualitative indicators (e.g. views, opinions) will be used as part of the evaluation, there should be evidence capturing the baseline 'position' for these indicators.

24. Phase 3.1: Analysis and reporting (interim Process Evaluation)

- a. The purpose of the interim process evaluation is to understand how the SPF was delivered (the associated processes, the activities involved in its implementation and the pathways by which the SPF was delivered) and why the policy was delivered in the ways it was. The interim process evaluation should provide answers to each of the pre-agreed evaluation questions in turn, make an assessment on if there would be any changes to these at the end of SPF funding and state recommendations for ongoing and future improvements.
- b. To ensure that the process evaluation is representative of the whole fund, consideration should be given to the delivery of programmes across the portfolio, ensuring that the range of delivery approaches are captured within this assessment.
- c. The interim process evaluation will support the final evaluation report. Expected components include:
 - i. Assessment of the SPF delivery structure and approach to understand how it has enabled SPF to achieve expected impacts by answering, but not limited, to pre-agreed process evaluation questions. This may include process mapping, surveys and interviews.
 - ii. Collated recommendations for ongoing and future improvements of SPF.

25. Phase 3.2: Analysis and reporting (Interim Impact and Economic Evaluation)

- a. The purpose of interim impact evaluation is to understand what difference the SPF is making in terms of economic, social and knowledge impacts, in addition to whether it is meeting its stated aims and objectives. As this phase will take place during the implementation of SPF it will provide an assessment of the shorter, medium and longer term outcomes and impacts of the programme to date, providing answers to each of the pre-agreed evaluation questions in turn and making an assessment on whether SPF is on track to deliver its expected impacts, and review and adjust the evaluation approach to date as necessary in order to deliver a full impact evaluation report.
- b. The purpose of the interim economic evaluation is to understand if the benefits of SPF justify the costs and how the costs and benefits were generated. It is acknowledged that it will be difficult to derive a robust assessment of value for money by monetising the value of SPF impacts and this work will support the wider impact evaluation.
- c. The interim impact and economic evaluation will support the final evaluation report. Expected components include:
 - i. Assessment of the SPF outcomes and impacts to date to assess if the SPF is on track for delivering the expected impacts by answering, but not limited to, pre-agreed impact and economic evaluation questions.
 - ii. Review of evidence collected through internal monitoring processes.
 - iii. A review of the evaluation approach and recommended adjustments if required (e.g. if some baseline indicators have become less relevant due to programme changes, the approach to evaluation and data

to be collected will require adjustment such as additional data collection on different indicators).

- iv. Early findings from selected case studies.

26. Phase 3.3: Analysis and reporting (Final Evaluation)

- a. The final evaluation reporting will include and update the interim process, impact and economic evaluations using the most current knowledge, data and experience of SPF available, providing comprehensive answers to each of the pre-agreed evaluation questions in turn.
- b. Expected components include:
 - i. An update of the interim process, impact and economic evaluations previously conducted at the completion of the fund (with thematic findings that address all evaluation questions), by analysing internal monitoring data collected and primary and secondary research conducted by the appointed evaluator.
 - ii. Assessment of the likelihood of achieving the expected impacts in the future beyond the life of programme.
 - iii. Lessons identified / recommendations for future improvements.
 - iv. A description of all caveats and assumptions surrounding the evidence that forms part of the Final Evaluation report (incl. definitions, sample size, response rate, collection method, caveats of data). This should include any updates or changes from the assumptions and definitions used in the interim evaluation reporting.
- c. UKRI will arrange an event (a workshop or conference) to share and reflect on the evaluation findings. The attendees for this event will likely be those stakeholders listed in paragraph 12. The contractor will be expected to deliver the PowerPoint presentation of the evaluation findings and participate in discussions at the event.

27. Phase 4: Evaluation post-SPF Wave 1 and 2

- a. **This invitation to tender covers Phase 1, 2 and 3 of the evaluation. Although it does not include Phase 4 of the evaluation,** proposals must clearly set out how the evaluation will be completed at the end of Phase 3 to allow the delivery of a longer-term continuation of the evaluation by any potential contractor, including through the provision of all data and contact lists.
- b. Proposals should include a strategy to merge the methodology used in Phases 1 to 3 into Phase 4 as there will be ongoing impacts that should be addressed at those later evaluation stages.

28. Outputs and Meetings

- a. The required outputs and meetings are shown below. The timelines have been suggested; however, if the bidder considers these timescales conflict with the methodology suggested, the bidder is invited to suggest alternative timescales and to provide a rationale.

Phase	Outputs	Meetings
1. Planning Phase		
Planning phase (Jun 2020 – Oct 2020)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Project plan. - Literature Review report. - Draft <i>Evaluation Framework</i> report for review. - Final <i>Evaluation Framework</i> report for acceptance. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Kick-off meeting with SPF Oversight Working Group. - Workshops (inception, validation workshops) with key SPF stakeholders and subject matter expertise to validate understanding of the SPF and evaluation framework - Meeting to present the Literature Review report and draft Evaluation Framework report to the NPIF Evaluation Oversight Board - Meeting to present the final Evaluation Framework report to the SPF Board

There will be a break clause in the contract at the end of each phase where UKRI will make a decision on the contract continuing. Bidders are required to cost each phase separately.		
2. Baseline Measurement		
Baseline measurement (Oct 2020 – Mar 2021)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Project plan update. - Draft <i>Baseline report</i> for review. - Final <i>Baseline report</i> for acceptance. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Workshop(s) to present and validate high level findings and report structure with key programme stakeholders - Meeting to present the draft Baseline report to the NPIF Evaluation Oversight Board - Meeting to present the final Baseline report to the SPF Board
There will be a break clause in the contract at the end of each phase where UKRI will make a decision on the contract continuing. Bidders are required to cost each phase separately.		
3. Analysis and Reporting		
Interim Process Evaluation (Oct 2020 – Apr 2021)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Project plan update - Draft <i>Interim Process Evaluation</i> report for review. - Final <i>Interim Process Evaluation</i> report for acceptance. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Meeting to present the draft Interim Process Evaluation report to the NPIF Evaluation Oversight Board - Meeting to present the final Interim Process Evaluation report to the SPF Board
There will be a break clause in the contract at the end of each phase where UKRI will make a decision on the contract continuing. Bidders are required to cost each phase separately.		
Interim Impact and Economic Evaluation (May 2021 – Oct 2022)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Project plan update - Draft <i>Interim Impact and Economic Evaluation</i> report for review. - Final <i>Interim Impact and Economic Evaluation</i> report for acceptance. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Meeting to present the draft Interim Evaluation report to the NPIF Evaluation Oversight Board - Meeting to present the final Interim Evaluation report to the SPF Board
There will be a break clause in the contract at the end of each phase where UKRI will make a decision on the contract continuing. Bidders are required to cost each phase separately.		
Final Evaluation (Nov 2022 – Dec 2025)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Project plan update - Draft <i>Final Evaluation</i> report for review. - Final <i>Evaluation</i> report for acceptance. - A SPF evaluation Data and Assumptions paper - External Presentation to support the final learning event - Strategy of evaluation post SPF report 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Meeting to present the draft Evaluation report and Evaluation post SPF report to the NPIF Evaluation Oversight Board - Meeting to present the final Evaluation report and Evaluation post SPF report to the SPF Board - Final learning event (a workshop or conference)

The Contract duration shall be for a period of 5 years with 3 break clauses, from commencement of the Contract.

- There will be a break clause in the contract at the end of phase 1 where UKRI will make a decision on the contract continuing

- There will be a break clause in the contract at the end of phase 2 where UKRI will make a decision on the contract continuing.
- There will be a break clause in the contract at the end of phase 3 where UKRI will make a decision on the contract continuing.

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

5.1. Introduction

- 5.1.1. The evaluation process will be conducted to ensure that Bids are evaluated fairly to ascertain the bidders who can demonstrate the required skills qualities, technical ability and capacity, commercial stability and experience to ensure successful performance of the Contract.
- 5.1.2. The evaluation team may comprise staff from UK SBS and the Contracting Authority, and any specific external stakeholders the Contracting Authority deem required

5.2. Evaluation of Bids

- 5.2.1. Evaluation of Bids shall be based on a Selection questionnaire and Award criteria as clearly defined in the e-sourcing tool.

5.3. SELECTION questionnaire

- 5.3.1. The Selection questionnaire shall be marked against the following Selection pass / fail and scoring criteria.
- 5.3.2. The selection questionnaire shall be marked against the following Mandatory or discretionary pass / fail criteria.

Selection Pass/fail criteria		
Questionnaire	Q No.	Question subject
Selection Questionnaire Part 1: Potential Supplier Information		
Section 1	1.3	Contact details and declaration
Part 2: Exclusion Grounds		
Section 2	2.1 (a)(i)	Participation in a criminal organisation
Section 2	2.1(a)(ii)	Corruption
Section 2	2.1(a)(iii)	Fraud
Section 2	2.1(a)(iv)	Terrorist Offences or offences link to terrorist activities
Section 2	2.1(a)(v)	Money laundering or Terrorist financing
Section 2	2.1(a)(vi)	Child Labour and other forms of trafficking in human beings
Section 2	2.2	Self cleaning
Section 2	2.3(a)	Payment of tax or social security
Section 3	3.1 (a)	Breach of environmental obligations
Section 3	3.1 (b)	Breach of social obligations
Section 3	3.1 (c)	Breach of labour law obligations
Section 3	3.1(d)	Bankruptcy
Section 3	3.1(e)	Guilty of grave professional misconduct
Section 3	3.1(f)	Distorting competition
Section 3	3.1(g)	Conflict of Interest

Section 3	3.1(h)	Prior involvement in procurement process
Section 3	3.1(i)	Prior performance of contract
Section 3	3.1(j)(i)	Serious Misrepresentation
Section 3	3.1(j)(ii)	Withholding information
Section 3	3.1(j)(iii)	Unable to provide supporting documentation for ESPD
Section 3	3.1(j)(iv)	Influenced the decision-making process
Part 3: Selection Questions		
Section 4	4.1	Audited accounts
Section 4	4.2	Minimum financial threshold
Section 5	5.1	Wider group
Section 5	5.2	Parent Company Guarantee
Section 5	5.3	Other Guarantee
Section 6	6.1	Relevant experience and contract examples
Section 7	7.1	Compliance under Modern Slavery Act 2015
Section 8	8.1(a)	Insurance
Section 9	SEL5.5	Health and Safety Policy
Section 9	SEL5.6	Enforcement/remedial orders in relation to the Health and Safety Executive
Section 9	SEL5.7	Breaching environmental legislation
Section 9	SEL5.8	Checking sub-contractors for infringement of environmental legislation
Section 9	SEL5.9	Unlawful discrimination
Section 9	SEL5.10	Checking sub-contractors for unlawful discrimination
Section 9	FOI1.1	Freedom of information
	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 the any of the selection stage scoring methodology, nor the Award stage scoring methodology or Mandatory pass / fail criteria.	

- 5.3.3. Each Mandatory pass / fail question includes a clear definition of the requirements of a successful response to the question.
- 5.3.4. The evaluation model below shall be used for this RFP which will be determined to two decimal places.
- 5.3.5. Questions marked 'for information only' do not contribute to the scoring model.

Selection Evaluation of criteria

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.

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

- 5.3.6. During the evaluation stage, the intention is that only Bidders who achieve a Pass of all the Mandatory and Discretionary requirements of the RFP will be considered for award stage evaluation.

5.4. AWARD questionnaire

- 5.4.1. The award questionnaire shall be marked against the following Mandatory or discretionary pass / fail criteria. Each Mandatory pass / fail question includes a clear definition of the requirements of a successful response to the question.

Award Pass/fail criteria

Questionnaire	Q No.	Question subject
Commercial	AW1.1	Form of Bid
Commercial	AW1.2	Bid validity period
Commercial	AW1.3	Certificate of bona fide Bid
Commercial	AW4.1	Compliance to the Contract Terms
Commercial	AW4.2	Changes to the Contract Terms
Price	AW5.1	Firm and fixed price
Commercial	AW5.4	E Invoice
Commercial	AW5.5	E Invoice implementation
Price	AW5.6	Maximum price
Quality	AW6.1	Compliance to the Specification
Quality	AW6.2	Variable Bids
-	-	Request for Proposal response – received on time within the 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 the any of the selection stage scoring methodology, nor the Award stage scoring methodology or Mandatory pass / fail criteria.		

- 5.4.2. The Award stage of due process shall be marked against the following Award scoring criteria.
- 5.4.3. The evaluation model below shall be used for this RFP which will be determined to two decimal places.
- 5.4.4. Questions marked 'for information only' do not contribute to the scoring model.

Award 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 RFP. 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	10.00%
Quality	PROJ1.1	Approach	35.00%
Quality	PROJ1.2	Staff to deliver	20.00%
Quality	PROJ1.3	Understanding the environment	15.00%
Quality	PROJ1.4	Project Plan and Timescales	10.00%
Quality	PROJ1.5	Interview	10.00%

Award Evaluation of criteria

Non-Price elements

Each question will be evaluated 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 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 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 40

Evaluator 3 scored your bid as 80

Evaluator 4 scored your bid as 60

Your final score will $(60+40+80+60) \div 4 = 60$

Price elements will be evaluated 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.

5.5. Evaluation process

5.5.1. 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">• RFP logged upon opening in alignment with UK SBS's procurement procedures.• Any RFP 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 Selection 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 Selection criteria.
Validation of unsuccessful Bidders	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• To confirm contents of the letters to provide details of scoring and relative feedback on the unsuccessful Bidders Bid in comparison with the successful Bidders Bid.

Section 6 – Selection and award questionnaires

Section 6 – Selection questionnaire

6.1. Introduction

The Selection questionnaires are located in the within the e-sourcing tool.

Guidance on completion of the questions are is available at
<http://www.uksbs.co.uk/services/procure/Pages/supplier.aspx>

PLEASE NOTE THE QUESTIONS ARE NOT NUMBERED SEQUENTIALLY

Section 6 – Award questionnaire

- 6.2. The Award questionnaires are located within the e-sourcing tool.
- 6.3. Guidance on completion of the questions 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

7.1. Introduction

- 7.1.1. The Contracting Authority wishes to establish a Contract for the provision of Evaluation of the UKRI Strategic Priorities Fund (SPF). The Contracting Authority is managing this procurement process in accordance with the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 (as may be amended from time to time) (the “Regulations”). This is a services Contract being procured under the OJEU Open Procedure
- 7.1.2. The Contracting Authority is procuring the Contract for add for its exclusive use.
- 7.1.3. UK SBS and the Contracting Authority logo, trademarks and other identifying marks are proprietary and may not be incorporated in the Companies response without or the Contracting Authority’s written permission.
- 7.1.4. The Bidder shall indemnify and keep indemnified UK SBS and the Contracting Authority against all actions, claims, demands, proceedings, damages, costs, losses, charges and expenses whatsoever in respect of any breach by the Bidder of this document.
- 7.1.5. If there is any doubt with regard to the ambiguity of any question or content contained in this questionnaire then PLEASE ASK a clarification question, but please ensure that your question is via the formal clarification process in writing to the UK SBS representative nominated. No approach of any kind in connection with this opportunity should be made to any other person within or associated with UK SBS or the Contracting Authority. All information secured outside of this named contact shall have no legal standing or worth and should not be relied upon.
- 7.1.6. It remains the responsibility of the Bidder to keep UK SBS and the Contracting Authority informed of any matter that may affect continued qualification
- 7.1.7. Prior to commencing formal evaluation, Submitted Responses will be checked to ensure they are fully compliant with the Pass / Fail criteria within the Evaluation model. Non-compliant Submitted Responses may be rejected by the Contracting Authority. Submitted Responses which are deemed by the Contracting Authority to be fully compliant will proceed to evaluation. These will be evaluated using the criteria and scores detailed in the matrix set out in [Section 5](#).
- 7.1.8. Whilst it is the Contracting Authority’s intention to purchase the majority of its services under this Contract Arrangement from the Supplier(s) appointed this does not confer any exclusivity on the appointed Suppliers. The Contracting Authority and any relevant Other Public Bodies reserve the right to purchase any services and services (including those similar to the services covered by this procurement) from any Supplier outside of this Contract.
- 7.1.9. The Contracting Authority reserves the right not to conclude a Contract as a result of the current procurement process. Bidders should review the contents of Section 7 paragraph 7.8.1 when considering submitting their Response.
- 7.1.10. The services covered by this procurement exercise have NOT been sub-divided into Lots.

- 7.1.11. The Contracting Authority shall utilise the Delta eSourcing Procurement Tool available at <https://uksbs.delta-esourcing.com/> to conduct this procurement. There will be no electronic auction following the conclusion of the evaluation of the Request for Proposal (RFP) responses. Bidders will be specifically advised where attachments are permissible to support a question response within the e-sourcing tool. All enquiries with respect to problems or functionality within the tool may be submitted to Delta eSourcing on 0845 270 7050
- 7.1.12. Please utilise the messaging system within the e-sourcing tool located at <https://uksbs.delta-esourcing.com/> within the timescales detailed in [Section 3](#). if you have any doubt as to what is required or will have difficulty in providing the information requested. Bidders should note that any requests for clarifications may not be considered by the Contracting Authority if they are not articulated by the Bidder within the discussion forum within the e-sourcing tool.
- 7.1.13. Bidders should read this document, Stage One: Overview Section. messages and the evaluation questionnaires carefully before completing the Response submission. Failure to comply with any of these instructions for completion and submission of the Submitted Response may result in the rejection of the Response. Bidders are advised therefore to acquaint themselves fully with the extent and nature of the services and contractual obligations. These instructions constitute the Conditions of Response. Participation in the RFP process automatically signals that the Bidder accepts these Conditions.
- 7.1.14. All material issued in connection with this RFP shall remain the property of the Contracting Authority and/or as applicable relevant OPB and shall be used only for the purpose of this procurement. All Due Diligence Information shall be either returned to the Contracting Authority or securely destroyed by the Bidder (at the Contracting Authority's option) at the conclusion of the procurement
- 7.1.15. The Bidder shall ensure that each and every sub-contractor, consortium member and adviser abide by the terms of these instructions and the Conditions of Response.
- 7.1.16. The Bidder shall not make contact with any other employee, agent or consultant of UK SBS or the Contracting Authority or any relevant OPB or Customer who are in any way connected with this procurement during the period of this procurement, unless instructed otherwise by the Contracting Authority.
- 7.1.17. The Contracting Authority shall not be committed to any course of action as a result of:
- 7.1.17.1. issuing this RFP or any invitation to participate in this procurement ;
 - 7.1.17.2. an invitation to submit any Response in respect of this procurement;
 - 7.1.17.3. communicating with a Bidder or a Bidder's representatives or agents in respect of this procurement; or
 - 7.1.17.4. any other communication between UK SBS, the Contracting Authority and/or any relevant OPB (whether directly or by its agents or representatives) and any other party.
- 7.1.18. Bidders shall accept and acknowledge that by issuing this RFP the Contracting Authority shall not be bound to accept any Response and reserves the right not to conclude a Contract for some or all of the services for which Responses are invited.
- 7.1.19. The Contracting Authority reserves the right to amend, add to or withdraw all or any part of this RFP at any time during the procurement.

- 7.1.20. Bidders should not include in the Response any extraneous information which has not been specifically requested in the RFP including, for example, any sales literature, standard terms of trading etc. Any such information not requested but provided by the Bidder shall not be considered by the Contracting Authority.
- 7.1.21. If the Bidder is a consortium, the following information must be provided: full details of the consortium; and the information sought in this RFP in respect of each of the consortium's constituent members as part of a single composite response. Potential Providers should provide details of the actual or proposed percentage shareholding of the constituent members within the consortium as indicated in the relevant section of the selection questionnaire SEL1.9 specifically refers. If a consortium is not proposing to form a corporate entity, full details of alternative proposed arrangements should be provided as indicated in the relevant section of the RFP. However, please note the Contracting Authority reserves the right to require a successful consortium to form a single legal entity in accordance with regulation 19(6) of the Regulations. The Contracting Authority recognises that arrangements in relation to consortia may (within limits) be subject to future change. Potential Providers should therefore respond in the light of the arrangements as currently envisaged. Potential Providers are reminded that any future proposed change in relation to consortia must be notified to the Contracting Authority so that it can make a further assessment by applying the selection criteria to the new information provided and consider rejection of the Response if the Contracting Authority reasonably consider the change to have a material impact of the delivery of the viability of the Response.

7.2. Confidentiality

- 7.2.1. Subject to the exceptions referred to in paragraph 7.3.2, the contents of this RFP are being made available by the Contracting Authority on condition that:
- 7.2.1.1. Bidders shall at all times treat the contents of the RFP and any related documents (together called the 'Information') as confidential, save in so far as they are already in the public domain;
 - 7.2.1.2. Bidders shall not disclose, copy, reproduce, distribute or pass any of the Information to any other person at any time or allow any of these things to happen;
 - 7.2.1.3. Bidders shall not use any of the Information for any purpose other than for the purposes of submitting (or deciding whether to submit) a Response; and
 - 7.2.1.4. Bidders shall not undertake any publicity activity within any section of the media in relation to this procurement
- 7.2.2. Bidders may disclose, distribute or pass any of the Information to the Bidder's advisers, sub-contractors or to another person provided that either:
- 7.2.2.1. This is done for the sole purpose of enabling a Response to be submitted and the person receiving the Information undertakes in writing to keep the Information confidential on the same terms as if that person were the Bidder; or
 - 7.2.2.2. The disclosure is made for the sole purpose of obtaining legal advice from external lawyers in relation to the procurement or to any Contract arising from it; or
 - 7.2.2.3. The Bidder is legally required to make such a disclosure
- 7.2.3. In paragraphs 7.3.1 and 7.3.2 above the term 'person' includes but is not limited to any person, firm, body or association, corporate or incorporate.

- 7.2.4. UK SBS and the Contracting Authority may disclose detailed information relating to Responses to its employees, agents or advisers and they may make any of the Contract documents available for private inspection by its officers, employees, agents or advisers. UK SBS and the Contracting Authority also reserve the right to disseminate information that is materially relevant to the procurement to all Bidders, even if the information has only been requested by one Bidder, subject to the duty to protect each Bidder's commercial confidentiality in relation to its Response (unless there is a requirement for disclosure as explained in paragraphs 7.4.1 to 7.4.3 below).
- 7.2.5. 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. Subject to section 7.4 below, the information will not be disclosed outside Government. Bidders taking part in this RFP consent to these terms as part of the competition process.

- 7.2.6. The Government introduced 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>
- 7.2.7. The Contracting Authority reserves the right to amend any security related term or condition of the draft contract accompanying this RFP to reflect any changes introduced by the GSC. In particular where this RFP 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](#)
- [Tenders Electronic Daily](#)
- [Equalities Act introduction](#)
- [Bribery Act introduction](#)

- [Freedom of information Act](#)

7.3. Freedom of information

- 7.3.1. 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 and the Contracting Authority may be required to disclose information submitted by the Bidder to the to the Contracting Authority.
- 7.3.2. 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.
- 7.3.3. 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.
- 7.3.4. Where a Bidder receives a request for information under the FoIA or the EIR during the procurement, this should be immediately passed on to the Contracting Authority and the Bidder should not attempt to answer the request without first consulting with the Contracting Authority.
- 7.3.5. Bidders are reminded that the Government's transparency agenda requires that sourcing documents, including RFP templates such as this, are published on a designated, publicly searchable web site, and, that the same applies to other sourcing documents issued by 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 RFP Bidders are agreeing that their participation and contents of their Response may be made public.

7.4. Response Validity

- 7.4.1. Your Response should remain open for consideration for a period of [90 days]. A Response valid for a shorter period may be rejected.

7.5. Timescales

- 7.5.1. [Section 3](#) of the RFP 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.

7.6. The Contracting Authority's Contact Details

- 7.6.1. 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.

- 7.6.2. 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/>
- 7.6.3. 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.

7.7. Preparation of a Response

- 7.7.1. Bidders must obtain for themselves at their own responsibility and expense all information necessary for the preparation of Responses. Bidders are solely responsible for all costs, expenses and other liabilities arising in connection with the preparation and submission of their Response and all other stages of the selection and evaluation process. Under no circumstances will UK SBS or the Contracting Authority, or any of their advisers, be liable for any such costs, expenses or liabilities borne by Bidders or their sub-contractors, suppliers or advisers in this process.
- 7.7.2. Bidders are required to complete and provide all information required by the Contracting Authority in accordance with the Conditions of Response and the Request for Proposal. Failure to comply with the Conditions and the Request for Proposal may lead the Contracting Authority to reject a Response.
- 7.7.3. The Contracting Authority relies on Bidders' own analysis and review of information provided. Consequently, Bidders are solely responsible for obtaining the information which they consider is necessary in order to make decisions regarding the content of their Responses and to undertake any investigations they consider necessary in order to verify any information provided to them during the procurement.
- 7.7.4. Bidders must form their own opinions, making such investigations and taking such advice (including professional advice) as is appropriate, regarding their Responses, without reliance upon any opinion or other information provided by the Contracting Authority or their advisers and representatives. Bidders should notify the Contracting Authority promptly of any perceived ambiguity, inconsistency or omission in this RFP, any of its associated documents and/or any other information issued to them during the procurement.
- 7.7.5. Bidders must ensure that each response to a question is within any specified word count. Any responses with words in excess of the word count will only be considered up to the point where they meet the word count, any additional words beyond the volume defined in the word count will not be considered by the evaluation panel.
- 7.7.6. Bidders must ensure that each response to a question is not cross referenced to a response to another question. In the event of a Bidder adding a cross reference it will not be considered in evaluation.

7.8. Submission of Responses

- 7.8.1. The Response must be submitted as instructed in this document through the e-sourcing tool. Failure to follow the instruction within each Section of this document, to

omit responses to any of the questions or to present your response in alignment with any guidance notes provided may render the Response non-compliant and it may be rejected.

- 7.8.2. The Contracting Authority may at its own absolute discretion extend the closing date and the time for receipt of Responses specified [Section 3](#).
- 7.8.3. Any extension to the RFP response period will apply to all Bidders.
- 7.8.4. Any financial data provided must be submitted in or converted into pounds sterling. Where official documents include financial data in a foreign currency, a sterling equivalent must be provided. Failure to adhere to this requirement will result in the Response not being considered.
- 7.8.5. The Contracting Authority do not accept responsibility for the premature opening or mishandling of Responses that are not submitted in accordance with the instructions of this document.
- 7.8.6. The Response and any documents accompanying it must be in the English language
- 7.8.7. Bidders must submit their response through the e-sourcing tool, unless explicitly requested by the Contracting Authority either in the procurement documents or via a formal clarification from the Contracting Authority. Responses received by any other method than requested will not be considered for the opportunity.
- 7.8.8. Responses will be submitted any time up to the date indicated in [Section 3](#). Responses received before this deadline will be retained in a secure environment, unopened until this deadline has passed.
- 7.8.9. Responses received after the date indicated in [Section 3](#) 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
 - 7.8.9.1. The Bidder must demonstrate irrefutable evidence in writing they have made best endeavours to ensure the Response was received on time and that the issue was beyond their control.
 - 7.8.9.2. Any request for a late Response to be considered must be emailed to the Buyer in [Section 3](#) in advance of 'the deadline' if a bidder believes their Response will be received late.
 - 7.8.9.3. The Contracting Authority reserves the right to accept or reject any late Response without justification to the affected Bidder and make no guarantee it will consider any request for a late Response to be considered.
- 7.8.10. Do not seek changes to the Bid after responses have been submitted and the deadline (date and time) for receipt of responses has passed.

7.9. Canvassing

- 7.9.1. Any Bidder who directly or indirectly canvasses any employee, or agent of UK SBS, the Contracting Authority or its members or any relevant OPB or any of its employees concerning the establishment of the Contract or who directly or indirectly obtains or attempts to obtain information from any such officer, member, employee or agent or concerning any other Bidder, Response or proposed Response will be disqualified.

7.10. Disclaimers

- 7.10.1. Whilst the information in this RFP, Due Diligence Information and supporting documents has been prepared in good faith, it does not purport to be comprehensive nor has it been independently verified.
- 7.10.2. Neither UK SBS, the Contracting Authority, nor any relevant OPB's nor their advisors, nor their respective directors, officers, members, partners, employees, other staff or agents:
- 7.10.2.1. makes any representation or warranty (express or implied) as to the accuracy, reasonableness or completeness of the RFP; or
 - 7.10.2.2. accepts any responsibility for the information contained in the RFP or for their fairness, accuracy or completeness of that information nor shall any of them be liable for any loss or damage (other than in respect of fraudulent misrepresentation) arising as a result of reliance on such information or any subsequent communication.
- 7.10.3. Any persons considering making a decision to enter into contractual relationships with the Contracting Authority and/or, as applicable, relevant OPB following receipt of the RFP should make their own investigations and their own independent assessment of the Contracting Authority and/or, as applicable, relevant OPB and its requirements for the services and should seek their own professional financial and legal advice. For the avoidance of doubt the provision of clarification or further information in relation to the RFP or any other associated documents (including the Schedules) is only authorised to be provided following a query made in accordance with Paragraph 7.15 of this RFP.

7.11. Collusive behaviour

- 7.11.1. Any Bidder who:
- 7.11.1.1. fixes or adjusts the amount of its Response by or in accordance with any agreement or arrangement with any other party; or
 - 7.11.1.2. communicates to any party other than UK SBS, the Contracting Authority or, as applicable, relevant OPB the amount or approximate amount of its proposed Response or information which would enable the amount or approximate amount to be calculated (except where such disclosure is made in confidence in order to obtain quotations necessary for the preparation of the Response or insurance or any necessary security); or
 - 7.11.1.3. enters into any agreement or arrangement with any other party that such other party shall refrain from submitting a Response; or
 - 7.11.1.4. enters into any agreement or arrangement with any other party as to the amount of any Response submitted; or
 - 7.11.1.5. offers or agrees to pay or give or does pay or give any sum or sums of money, inducement or valuable consideration directly or indirectly to any party for doing or having done or causing or having caused to be done in relation to any other Response or proposed Response, any act or omission,
- shall (without prejudice to any other civil remedies available to the Contracting Authority and without prejudice to any criminal liability which such conduct by a Bidder may attract) be disqualified.

7.12. No inducement or incentive

- 7.12.1. The RFP is issued on the basis that nothing contained in it shall constitute an inducement or incentive nor shall have in any other way persuaded a Bidder to submit a Response or enter into the Contract or any other contractual agreement.

7.13. Acceptance of the Contract

- 7.13.1. The Bidder in submitting the Response undertakes that in the event of the Response being accepted by the Contracting Authority and the Contracting Authority confirming in writing such acceptance to the Bidder, the Bidder will within 30 days of being called upon to do so by the Contracting Authority execute the Contract in the form set out in the Contract Terms or in such amended form as may subsequently be agreed.
- 7.13.2. The Contracting Authority shall be under no obligation to accept the lowest priced or any Response.

7.14. Queries relating to the Response

- 7.14.1. All requests for clarification about the requirements or the process of this procurement shall be made in through the e-sourcing tool unless where the e-sourcing tool is unavailable due to Delta eSourcing system maintenance or failure, in this instance all clarifications shall be by email to the contact defined in [Section 3](#).
- 7.14.2. The Contracting Authority will endeavour to answer all questions as quickly as possible but cannot guarantee a minimum response time.
- 7.14.3. In the event of a Bidder requiring assistance uploading a clarification to the e-sourcing portal they should use the contact details defined in [Section 3](#).
- 7.14.4. No further requests for clarifications will be accepted after 7 days prior to the date for submission of Responses.
- 7.14.5. In order to ensure equality of treatment of Bidders, the Contracting Authority intends to publish the questions and clarifications raised by Bidders together with the Contracting Authority's responses (but not the source of the questions) to all participants on a regular basis.
- 7.14.6. Bidders should indicate if a query is of a commercially sensitive nature – where disclosure of such query and the answer would or would be likely to prejudice its commercial interests. However, if the Contracting Authority at its sole discretion does not either; consider the query to be of a commercially confidential nature or one which all Bidders would potentially benefit from seeing both the query and the Contracting Authority's response, the Contracting Authority will:
- 7.14.6.1. invite the Bidder submitting the query to either declassify the query and allow the query along with the Contracting Authority's response to be circulated to all Bidders; or
 - 7.14.6.2. request the Bidder, if it still considers the query to be of a commercially confidential nature, to withdraw the query prior to the end of the closing date and time for Bidder clarifications.
- 7.14.7. The Contracting Authority reserves the right not to respond to a request for clarification or to circulate such a request where it considers that the answer to that request would or would be likely to prejudice its commercial interests.

7.15. Amendments to Response Documents

- 7.15.1. At any time prior to the deadline for the receipt of Responses, the Contracting Authority may modify the RFP by amendment. Any such amendment will be numbered and dated and issued by the Contracting Authority to all prospective Bidders. In order to give prospective Bidders reasonable time in which to take the amendment into account in preparing their Responses, the Contracting Authority may, at its discretion, extend the time and/or date for receipt of Responses.

7.16. Modification and withdrawal

- 7.16.1. Bidders may modify their Response where allowable within the e-sourcing tool. No Response may be modified after the deadline for submission of Responses.
- 7.16.2. Bidders may withdraw their Response at any time prior the deadline for submission of Responses [or any other time prior to accepting the offer of a Contract]. The notice to withdraw the Response must be in writing and sent to the Contracting Authority by recorded delivery or equivalent service and delivered to the Head of Policy UK SBS at UK Shared Business Services Ltd, Procurement, Polaris House, North Star Avenue, Swindon, Wiltshire, SN2 1ET

7.17. Right to disqualify or reject

- 7.17.1. The Contracting Authority reserves the right to reject or disqualify a Bidder where
- 7.17.1.1. the Bidder fails to comply fully with the requirements of this Request for Proposal or presents the response in a format contrary to the requirements of this document; and/or
 - 7.17.1.2. the Bidder is guilty of serious misrepresentation in relation to its Response; expression of interest; or the Response process; and/or
 - 7.17.1.3. there is a change in identity, control, financial standing or other factor impacting on the selection and/or evaluation process affecting the Bidder.

7.18. Right to cancel, clarify or vary the process

- 7.18.1. The Contracting Authority reserves the right to:
- 7.18.1.1. cancel the evaluation process at any stage; and/or
 - 7.18.1.2. require the Bidder to clarify its Response in writing and/or provide additional information. (Failure to respond adequately may result in the Bidder not being selected),

7.19. Notification of award

- 7.19.1. The Contracting Authority will notify the successful Bidder of the Contract award in writing and will publish an Award Notice in the Official Journal of the European Union in accordance with the Regulations within 30 days of the award of the contract.
- 7.19.2. As required by the Regulations all successful and unsuccessful Bidders will be provided with an email advising the outcome of the submission of their RFP 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 “RFP Response”	means the Bidders formal offer in response to this Request for Proposal
“Bidder(s)”	means the organisations being invited to respond to this Request for Proposal
“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 RFP relating to the submission of a Bid
“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 OJEU Contract Notice
“Contracting Authority”	A public body regulated under the Public Contracts 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 Request for Proposal
"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
“Lot”	means a discrete sub-division of the requirements
“Mandatory”	Means a pass / fail criteria which must be met in order for a Bid to be considered, unless otherwise specified.
“OJEU Contract Notice”	means the advertisement issued in the Official Journal of the European Union
“Order”	means an order for served by any Contracting Body on the Supplier
“Other Public Bodies”	means all Contracting Bodies except the Contracting Authority
“Request for Proposal” or “RFP”	means this Request for Proposal 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
“Supplier”	means the organisation awarded the Contract
“Supplies / Services / Works”	means any supplies/services and supplies or works set out at within Section 4 Specification