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Invitation to Tender: Information and Guidance

Supply of Multiparameter Water Quality Instruments – Lots 3 & 4

Reference: C28150 (P37306)

January 2025

PART 1 – Contract Strategy

The Authority requires a new Call-Off Contract for the supply of multi-parameter instruments in order to equip the Environment Agency with the best evidence gathering instruments available. Future equipment must require substantially less maintenance than previously required, have a longer working life and help create cost savings in future years.

With this in mind, we require a Call-Off Contract for the supply of handheld meters, and units capable of being telemetry compatible. The latter will be used for marine, estuarine and fresh water deployments.

Therefore, the Call-Off Contract is to be split into **Two** Lots. One supplier is to be appointed for each lot, and will be the sole supplier for that lot. The same supplier could be appointed to one or all lots.

- Lot 3: **Purchase** of: Multi-Parameter Instruments, deployable for marine use
- Lot 4: **Hire** of: Multi-Parameter Instruments, deployable for marine use

The Call-Off Contract for **Lot 3** is to be awarded for **3 years** with the option to extend for **2 additional 12-month periods**.

The Call-Off Contract for **Lot 4** is to be awarded for **3 years** with the option to extend for **2 additional 12-month periods**.

(It should be noted that Call-Off Contracts for Lot 1 and 2 have already been Awarded separately.)

The Prices will be those detailed in the pricelist as submitted in the tender. The Prices will be fixed for the duration of the Contract (i.e 3 years) and any agreed extension (2 years), (applicable by the Lot) until the Contract ends.

The Agency will retain the option to purchase upgrades throughout the term of the agreement and these upgrades should be at the same, if not lower prices as those tendered.

This tender will be conducted as an Open Procedure as governed by the Public Contracting Regulations 2015

This is a single stage procedure and no negotiation is permitted. The buyer may clarify any assumptions prior to making a final award decision.

Following evaluation of the final tenders received, we will inform all bidders of the final result via a Regulation 86 notice in accordance with the Regulations. Unsuccessful bidders will be notified of:

- Their score against the award criteria
- The winning bidder
- The score of the winning bidder
- The characteristics and relative advantages of the winning bid

A statutory 10 day standstill period will commence after the Regulation 86 notice has been sent electronically to all of the bidders, after which the contract will be awarded to the successful supplier.

Low or Standard Good and Services Terms and Conditions will apply

[Low value terms and conditions for goods and services \(under £10,000\) - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

PART 2 – Procurement Tender Process

Key elements of the process have been reviewed and the planned activities and timescales are:

Activity	Date
Invitation to Tender issued to suppliers	21 February 2025
Final Clarifications	26 March 2025 @ 14:00 Hours (GMT)
Return of Invitation to Tender deadline for suppliers	04 April 2025 @ 14:00 Hours (BST)
Evaluation Process and timescales for action	07 April – 16 April 2025
Suppliers notified of intention to award	06 May 2025
Standstill Period (10 days)	07 – 17 May 2025
Successful Supplier(s) notified with Contract Award date/Contract Issued	19 May 2025
Contract Start Date	2 June 2025

It should be noted that these timescales and activities might be subject to change.

Right to Cancel

The Environment Agency reserves the right to discontinue the procurement process at any time, which shall include the right not to award a Contract, and does not bind itself to accept the lowest tender, or any tender received, and reserves the right to award the Contract in part, or to call for new tenders should it consider this necessary.

The Environment Agency shall not be liable for any costs or expenses incurred by any candidate or tenderer in connection with the completion or submission of any tender.

PART 3 – Tender Evaluation Process

Mandatory Cabinet Office questions

Please refer to the Qualification Envelope in Atamis or appendix for the supplier selection questionnaire. This must be completed by all parties delivering the contract.

Suppliers with the most economically advantageous tender in relation to quality and price, evaluated as described in section 1.4.1, will be awarded a Call-Off Contract.

Suppliers may bid for one or all Lots and can be awarded one or all Lots.

PART 4 – Criteria for Tender Evaluation

Tenders will be evaluated against a Cost/Quality weighting ratio of: **60 Commercial (Price)** and **40 Technical (Quality)**.

Technical – (Quality)

Please provide detailed and comprehensive evidence, of meeting or exceeding the specifications required.

This should include:

Detail on how equipment has been tested and proven to meet the requirement

Technical specifications of materials and their performance characteristics used in the production of sonde body, sensor and cable assemblies.

Results of testing and proof of IP ratings.

Results of testing of sensor characteristics and performance over their full working range.

Detailed evidence to support the requirement that; temperature compensation of sensors applies across the full stated operating temperature of the sensors.

All accreditation certificates provided by appropriate authorities.

The Qualification assessment will specifically cover the goods and associated services.

The Technical assessment will specifically cover the core criteria, outlined below:

Award Criteria	Weighting (%)	Evaluation Topic
E01 Technical Performance	60	<p>Please provide detailed and comprehensive evidence, of meeting or exceeding the specifications required.</p> <p>This should include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Detail on how equipment has been tested and proven to meet the requirement• Technical specifications of materials and their performance characteristics used in the production of sonde body, sensor and cable assemblies.• Results of testing and proof of IP ratings.• Results of testing of sensor characteristics and performance over their full working range.• Detailed evidence to support the requirement that; temperature compensation of sensors applies across the full stated operating temperature of the sensors.• All accreditation certificates provided by appropriate authorities. <p>Your response must be a maximum of 6 (six) sides of A4, font size 12. Please upload a document with the filename: "E01 - Your Company Name". Any responses exceeding 6 (six) sides of A4 (excluding the Certificates) will not be evaluated beyond the sixth side. Certificates, technical specifications and testing evidence are excluded from the page count and must be provided separately. These documents should be clearly named "E01 – Your Company Name – Purpose of Document". These</p>

		additional documents will be used to validate and support the main response.
E02 After Sales Provision	10	<p>Provide evidence of how you will meet the SLA on equipment, consumables and spares delivery as set out in the Specification. Please include repair and warranty replacements. Details are in the SLA table (<i>NWQIS Service Level Requirements</i>) on page 6.</p> <p>Under Lot 4 please detail what is included in the hire of an instrument. Please be specific and include calibrations, replacements and timelines.</p> <p>Demonstrate your approach to ensuring a response within 24 hours of an initial enquiry.</p> <p>Please provide mini-CVs detailing the key skills and experience of the project team. Please identify Key Roles and Key Staff – we expect the Contract Manager and Technical Specialist (or equivalent) to be included.</p> <p>Please provide an organogram of the project team.</p> <p>Your response must be a maximum of 5 sides of A4, font size 12. The organogram can be provided separately. Please upload a document with the filename: “E02 - Your Company Name” and a second document with the filename “E02 – Your Company Name – Organogram”. Any responses exceeding 5 sides of A4 (excluding the organogram) will not be evaluated beyond the fifth page.</p>
E03 Quality Assurance	16	<p>Provide details of your quality assurance process and demonstrate that it is robust. Demonstrate that all goods meet standards required.</p> <p>Provide detailed documentation illustrating conformity with international performance standards for materials performance and water resistance.</p>

		<p>Your response must be a maximum of 2 sides of A4, font size 12.</p> <p>Please upload a document with the filename: "E03 - Your Company Name". The detailed documentation regarding certification is excluded from the page count and must be provided separately in a document/documents named "E03 – Your Company Name – Supporting Evidence". Any responses exceeding two sides of A4 (excluding the Certificates) will not be evaluated beyond the second side.</p>
E04 Approach to Social Value and Lifecycle	7	<p>Provide details on how you will support and grow the skillset needed in the wider industry.</p> <p>Demonstrate your understanding of employment and skills issues, and of the education and training issues relating to the contract.</p> <p>This could include: demographics, skills shortages, new opportunities in high growth sectors, groups under-represented in the workforce (e.g. prison leavers, disabled people), geographic/local community and skills/employment challenges. Support for educational attainment relevant to the contract, including training schemes that address skills gaps and result in recognised qualifications.</p> <p>Activities to support relevant sector related skills growth and sustainability in the contract workforce could include: careers talks, curriculum support, literacy support, safety talks and volunteering. Delivery of apprenticeships, traineeships and T Level industry placement opportunities (Level 2, 3 and 4+) in relation to the contract.</p> <p>For further information on the evaluation of Social Value, please see PPN 06/20, available on gov.uk.</p>

		<p>Your response must be a maximum of 2 sides of A4, font size 12. Please upload a document with the filename: "E04 - Your Company Name". Any responses exceeding two sides of A4 will not be evaluated beyond the second side.</p>
E05 - Approach to Sustainability	7	<p>Demonstrate your approach to managing waste disposal and life cycle of the instrumentation, with reference to policies or processes such as Carbon reduction and Circular Economy.</p> <p>Your response must be a maximum of 2 sides of A4, font size 12. Please upload a document with the filename: "E05 - Your Company Name". Any responses exceeding two sides of A4 will not be evaluated beyond the second side.</p>

Commercial – (Price)

Appendix A - Lot Based Price

Tenderers will have an opportunity to submit their Lot Based Prices (Appendix A).

The price evaluation will include the Total Price for the cost of their instrumentation

The Unit Price based on the estimated Quantity of Products, per Annum.

We will multiply the **estimated volumes** provided by the **unit costs**, and the sum of those figures will be the evaluated **price** for each lot.

Please note that these are estimated Quantities only and will not mandate the Quantity of Products purchased during the life of the Contract.

Appendix A – Lot Based Price



Appendix A -
Supply of Multipara

(Summarised Below)

Lot 3 – Purchased - Deployable Marine

Item	Per annum – estimated	£
Multi parameter body assembly	15	
Temperature probe	15	
Conductivity probe	15	
Dissolved oxygen probe /body	15	
Turbidity probe	15	
DO membrane cap	45	
Salinity	15	
Pressure / Depth	15	
External	15	
Cable	15	
Total		£

Lot 4 – Hired - Deployable Marine

Item	1 month Hire	6 months Hire	12 months Hire
Multi parameter body assembly including (Temperature probe, Conductivity probe, Dissolved oxygen probe /body, Turbidity probe, DO membrane cap, Salinity, Pressure / Depth, External, Cable, Salinity, Pressure / Depth, External, Cable) (Number of units to Hire 5, 10 & 15)			
Total	£	£	£

The pricing schedule will also provide opportunity to present any discount options that organisations are able to offer.

Commercial Evaluation (40%)

Please complete the pricing schedule, providing prices excluding VAT. Please detail any risks and assumptions made and what has been included in the prices. All expenses should be listed separately and included in the overall amount for your tender. Please indicate if VAT will apply to your services and at what rate. We welcome applications from individual organisations or from consortia.

Tenderers are required to submit a total fixed cost for completion of the project and include a breakdown of costs against each objective. Costs will need to be reasonable and competitive and offer value for money.

Evaluation

The calculation used is the following:

$$\text{Score} = \frac{\text{Lowest Tender Price}}{\text{Tender Price}} \times 40\% \text{ (Maximum available marks)}$$

For example, if three Tender Responses are received and Tenderer A has quoted £3,000 as their total price, Tenderer B has quoted £5,000 and Tenderer C has quoted £6,000 then the calculation will be as follows:

$$\text{Tenderer A Score} = \frac{£3000}{£3000} \times 40\% \text{ (Maximum available marks)} = 40\%$$

$$\text{Tenderer B Score} = \frac{£3000}{£5000} \times 40\% \text{ (Maximum available marks)} = 24\%$$

$$\text{Tenderer C Score} = \frac{£3000}{£6000} \times 40\% \text{ (Maximum available marks)} = 20\%$$

The scoring ranges and approach for evaluation will follow the criteria set out below.

Evaluation of Responses

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

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

Scoring Criteria

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

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

If a score of Two or Zero is awarded to a response to one (1) or more of questions **E01 – E05** the Authority may choose to reject the Tender.

Calculation Method

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

Technical (WT)

$$\left[\frac{\text{Bidder's Total Technical Score}}{\text{Highest Technical Score}} \times 100 = x \right] \text{ then } \left[\frac{x}{100} \times 60 \right]$$

Commercial (WC)

$$\left[\frac{\text{Lowest Commercial Score}}{\text{Bidder's Total Commercial Score}} \times 100 = x \right] \text{ then } \left[\frac{x}{100} \times 40 \right]$$

Lowest Commercial Score

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

PART 5 – Specification/Statement of Requirement

The instruments will be used for statutory monitoring, (including spot sampling), European Union Directive and Environment Management investigations. Equipment will be deployed from coastal survey vessels and rigid hulled inflated boats.

This specification provides full detail of what is expected in terms of the goods / services supplied under this Call-Off Contract. All goods / service proposed must at least comply with the mandatory parts of the specification or they will be considered non-compliant. This will result in your tender being excluded from the process.

All requirements in sections 2.1, 2.2 or 2.3 of this specification that use the word 'must' will be considered mandatory. Where a requirement also uses the words 'or exceed', the basic requirement is still mandatory but extra technical marks can be scored as described in the table in section 1.4.1 of the tender document. These sections carry an asterisk to identify them.

The successful tender will be required to use the EA catalogue system for our ordering purposes. This does not apply to Lot 4 and the hire of marine instruments. NWQIS will undertake periodic inspections annually to note any degradation in build quality of equipment casings and sensor performance to note any indications of premature failure.

Lot 3 and Lot 4 - Lot Specific Information

Lot 3 and Lot 4 specific: Multi- Parameter Deployable Water Quality Instruments Marine (only to be answered by bidders for Lot 3)

General Specification

2.1 General specification

G1

Sonde, sensor, data logging units and any associated battery housings must be waterproof and meet or exceed IP68 standard. Display units must be waterproof and meet or exceed IP67 standard. Sonde must have a depth rating of at least 200m. Robust, quality assured evidence to support this must be provided.

G2

All sonde / sensor and display units must be fully interchangeable.

G3

Calibration information and recorded data must be secure and recoverable following a battery failure.

G4

There must be an auto switch off function.

G5

The Sonde, sensor and display assemblies must have built in Good Laboratory Practice (GLP) diagnostics and data. They must record time / date of calibration, sensor coefficients, slopes and offsets.

G6*

The ranges, accuracy and resolution of sensors fitted to the instruments must meet or exceed the requirements of Sensor specification (below).

Sensor performance must be stated in the tender return by the manufacturer. These stated performance values must apply across the whole working temperature range of the instrument.

All automatic or manual sensor, temperature correction factors must apply across the full working range of the instrument.

Robust, quality assured evidence to support this must be provided.

G7*

The equipment (handsets, sonde bodies and sensor assemblies) proposed must have or exceed a working lifespan of 7 years.

G8

The sensors and battery/batteries if fitted must be housed into a single sonde body.

G9*

The sonde and sensor assembly bulkheads must be constructed of marine grade stainless steel (316) or a material that exceeds this specification regards its corrosion and strength characteristics such as duplex or titanium. Robust, quality assured evidence to support this must be provided.

G10

The sonde and sensor assembly bulkheads must be capable of withstanding exposure to detergents; methanol based cleaning agents and Virkon disinfectant. Robust, quality assured evidence to support this must be provided.

G11*

The instruments must meet or exceed a period of 8 weeks to remain within calibration.

G12

The sonde, sensor and display assemblies must be capable of direct connection to a PC for the purposes of calibration and / or software update.

G13

Instruments must retain all calibration offsets, coefficients and settings indefinitely.

G14

The data must be able to be downloaded from the unit to an Environment Agency networked computer.

G15

Suppliers must carry out preventative measures to ensure all software is virus free for the life of the contract.

G16

The instruments must be capable of outputting data in RS232 or SDI12 format directly or via an appropriate adapter.

G17

The Contractor must provide any manufacturer derived software upgrades free of charge to the Agency for the life of the contract.

G18

Stored data must be exported in Excel readable format and be able to be converted to an 'XML' format.

G19

Stored data must be protected by non-volatile memory.

G20

All necessary software licensing requirements must be provided. The software and licenses will not be chargeable to the Agency for the life of the contract.

G21

The instruments must offer flexible data logging options.

G22

Data must be secure in the event of a power failure.

G23

Display units must be small enough for hand-held operation in the field and have a backlight for use at night.

G24

The Instruments must be robust and fit for the purpose of use in the field. Robust, quality assured evidence to support this must be provided.

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G25*

Handset battery covers must be waterproof and meet or exceed IP67. Robust, quality assured evidence to support this must be provided.

G26

The instrument must be capable of delivering the following sensors:

Optical Dissolved Oxygen %

Optical Dissolved Oxygen mg/L (derived)

Temperature

Conductivity

Specific Conductivity (derived)

Salinity

Turbidity

Pressure/Depth

External

And have capability to read an additional 0-5 V analogue sensor.

Sensor Specification - Marine

Dissolved oxygen

The sensor must be capable of measuring dissolved oxygen in the range of 0-20 mg/l with an accuracy of +/- 0.2 mg/l; and in the range of 0-200% saturation with an accuracy of +/- 2% air saturation.

Turbidity

The instrument must be capable of measuring turbidity using a Nephelometric type probe.

It must be able to measure turbidity in the range 0-1500 NTU.

The sensor must have an accuracy of +/- 2% of reading or 0.2 NTUs

Temperature

The instrument must be capable of measuring temperature in the range of 0.5 -35 degrees C with an accuracy of +/- 0.01 degrees C;

Each temperature sensor must include a factory calibration/NIST reference sheet.

Conductivity

The instrument must be capable of measuring conductivity in the range of 0-60 mS/cm with an accuracy of +/- 0.15%

Salinity

The instrument must be capable of measuring salinity in the range of 2 - 40 with an accuracy of 0.2

Pressure / Depth

The instrument must be capable of operating to a depth of 200m in the range of 50 dBar with an accuracy of 0.5 dBar.

External

The instrument must have a 0-5v analogue input.

Proposed Timeline and Project Milestones

The Contract(s) are intended to commence and expire on the date shown below unless extended, using the optional extension period. Project milestones will be agreed between the Project group and the Contractor at the outset of the project and be Contract Management using KPIs and SLAs to assess the Quality of the Service and Products.

- **Lot 3:** The Contract is intended to commence on 2 June 2025 and expire on the 2 June 2028 unless extended, using the optional 2 year extension period. (2 additional 12-month periods).
- **Lot 4:** The Contract is intended to commence on 2 June 2025 and expire on the 2 June 2028 unless extended, using the optional 2 year extension period. (2 additional 12-month periods).

The Service Level Agreements (SLAs) are detailed below.

NWQIS Service Level Requirements							
Multiparameter System/Response requirements	Mandatory new equipment delivery timescales	Mandatory consumable delivery timescales	Mandatory repair delivery timescales	Mandatory replacement of any faulty equipment (which are within warranty) delivery timescales	Repair completed on time	Repair completed 2 weeks late	Repair completed beyond 2 weeks
Sonde body	6 weeks	4 weeks	6 weeks	2 weeks	Complete payment	80% payment	Free
Optical Dissolved Oxygen	6 weeks	4 weeks	6 weeks	2 weeks	Complete payment	80% payment	Free
Temperature	6 weeks	4 weeks	6 weeks	2 weeks	Complete payment	80% payment	Free
Conductivity	6 weeks	4 weeks	6 weeks	2 weeks	Complete payment	80% payment	Free
pH	6 weeks	4 weeks	6 weeks	2 weeks	Complete payment	80% payment	Free
Turbidity	6 weeks	4 weeks	6 weeks	2 weeks	Complete payment	80% payment	Free
Mandatory response timescales							
Enquiry response time	24 hours						