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**Request for Quotation**

**Resurvey of Dartmoor ESA moorland heather grazing monitoring transects - 2024**

**27th October 2023**

**Request for Quotation**

**Resurvey of Dartmoor ESA moorland heather grazing monitoring transects - 2024**

You are invited to submit a quotation for the requirement described in the specification, Section 2.

Please confirm by email, receipt of these documents and whether you intend to submit a quote or not.

Your response should be returned to the following email address:

Email:[david.hazlehurst@naturalengland.org.uk](mailto:david.hazlehurst@naturalengland.org.uk)

**By:**

Date: **13/11/2023**

Time: **12:00**

Ensure you include the name of the quotation and ‘Final Submission’ in the subject field to make it clear that it is your response.

**Contact Details and Timetable**

David Glaves [david.glaves@naturalengland.org.uk](mailto:david.glaves@naturalengland.org.uk) will be your contact for any technical questions linked to the content of the specification or the process. Please submit any clarification questions via email and note that, unless commercially sensitive, both the question and the response will be circulated to all tenderers.

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| Action | Date |
| Date of issue of RFQ | **30-11-2023** at **11:00** |
| Deadline for clarifications questions | **10-11-2023** at **12:00** |
| Deadline for receipt of Quotation | **13-11-2023** at **12:00** |
| Intended date of Contract Award | **20-11-2023** |
| Intended Contract Start Date | **27-11-2023** |
| Intended Delivery Date / Contract Duration | **27-11-2023** to **31/05/24** |

**Section 1: General Information**

**Glossary**

Unless the context otherwise requires, the following words and expressions used within this Request for Quotation shall have the following meanings (to be interpreted in the singular or plural as the context requires):

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| “Authority” | means Natural England who is the Contracting Authority. |
| “Contract” | means the contract to be entered into by the Authority and the successful supplier. |
| “Response” | means the information submitted by a supplier in response to the RFQ. |
| “RFQ” | means this Request for Quotation and all related documents published by the Authority and made available to suppliers. |

**Conditions applying to the RFQ**

You should examine your Response and related documents ensuring it is complete and in accordance with the stated instructions prior to submission.

Your Response must contain sufficient information to enable the Authority to evaluate it fairly and effectively. You should ensure that you have prepared your Response fully and accurately and that prices quoted are arithmetically correct for the units stated.

By submitting a Response, you, the supplier, are deemed to accept the terms and conditions provided in the RFQ. Confirmation of this is required in Annex 2.

Failure to comply with the instructions set out in the RFQ may result in the supplier’s exclusion from this quotation process.

**Acceptance of Quotations**

By issuing this RFQ the Authority does not bind itself to accept any quotation and reserves the right not to award a contract to any supplier who submits a quotation.

**Costs**

The Authority will not reimburse you for any costs and expenses which you incur preparing and submitting your quotation, even if the Authority amends or terminates the procurement process.

**Self-Declaration and Mandatory Requirements**

The RFQ includes a self-declaration response (Annex 1) which covers basic information about the supplier, as well as any grounds for exclusion. If you do not comply with them, your quotation will not be evaluated.

Any mandatory requirements will be set out in Section 2, Specification of Requirements and, if you do not comply with them, your quotation will not be evaluated.

**Clarifications**

Any request for clarification regarding the RFQ and supporting documentation must be submitted via email no later than the deadline for clarifications set out in the Timetable. The Authority shall be under no obligation to respond to queries raised after the clarification deadline.

The Authority will respond to all reasonable clarifications as soon as possible but cannot guarantee a minimum response time. The Authority will publish all clarifications and its responses to all suppliers via email unless deemed commercially sensitive.

If a supplier believes that a request for clarification is commercially sensitive, it should clearly state this when submitting the clarification request. However, if the Authority considers either that:

* the clarification and response are not commercially sensitive; and
* all suppliers may benefit from its disclosure,

then the Authority will notify the supplier (via email), and the supplier will have an opportunity to withdraw the request for clarification by sending a further message requesting the withdrawal of the clarification request. If not withdrawn by the supplier within 2 working days of the Authority’s notification, the Authority may publish the clarification request and its response to all suppliers and the Authority shall not be liable to the supplier for any consequences of such publication.

The Authority reserves the right to seek clarification of any aspect of a quotation and/or provide additional information during the evaluation phase to carry out a fair evaluation. Where the Authority seeks clarification on any aspect of the quotation, the supplier must respond within the timeframe requested by the Authority.

**Amendments**

The Authority may amend the RFQ at any time prior to the deadline for receipt. If it amends the RFQ the Authority will notify you via email.

Suppliers may modify their quotation prior to the deadline for Responses. No Responses may be modified after the deadline for Responses.

Suppliers may withdraw their quotations at any time by submitting a notice via the email to the named contact.

**Conditions of Contract**

The Authority’s **Standard Condensed Terms and Conditions** provided as part of the RFQ will be included in any contract awarded as a result of this quotation process. The Authority will not accept any changes to these terms and conditions proposed by a supplier.

Suppliers should note that the quotation provided by the successful bidder will form part of the Contract.

**Prices**

Prices must be submitted in £ sterling, inclusive of VAT.

**Disclosure**

All Central Government Departments, 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 Authority may disclose within Government any details contained in your quotation. The information will not be disclosed outside Government during the procurement.

In addition, the Authority is subject to the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and the Environmental Information Regulations 2004, which provide a public right of access to information held by public bodies. In accordance with these two statutes, the Authority may be required to disclose information contained in your quotation to any person who submits a request for information pursuant to those statutes.

Further to the Government’s transparency agenda, all UK Government organisations must advertise on Contract Finder in accordance with the following publication thresholds:

Central Contracting Authority’s: £12,000

Sub Central Contracting Authority’s and NHS Trusts: £30,000

For the purpose of this RFQ the Authority is classified as a Central Contracting Authority with a publication threshold of '£12,000' inclusive of VAT.

If this opportunity is advertised via Contracts Finder, we are obliged to publish details of the awarded contract including who has won the contract, the contract value, and indicate whether the winning supplier is a small and medium-sized enterprise (“SMEs”) or voluntary organisation or charity. A copy of the contract must also be published with confidential information redacted.

By submitting a Response, you consent to these terms as part of the procurement.

**Disclaimers**

Whilst the information in this RFQ and any supporting information referred to herein or provided to you by the Authority have been prepared in good faith the Authority does not warrant that this information is comprehensive or that it has been independently verified.

The Authority does not:

* make any representation or warranty (express or implied) as to the accuracy, reasonableness or completeness of the RFQ;
* accept any liability for the information contained in the RFQ or for the fairness, accuracy or completeness of that information; or
* accept any liability for any loss or damage (other than in respect of fraudulent misrepresentation or any other liability which cannot lawfully be excluded) arising as a result of reliance on such information or any subsequent communication.

Any supplier considering entering into contractual relationships with the Authority following receipt of the RFQ should make its own investigations and independent assessment of the Authority and its requirements for the goods and/or services and should seek its own professional financial and legal advice.

**Protection of Personal Data**

In order to comply with the General Data Protection Regulations 2018, the supplier must agree to the following:

* You must only process any personal data in strict accordance with instructions from the Authority.
* You must ensure that all the personal data that we disclose to you, or you collect on our behalf under this agreement are kept confidential.
* You must take reasonable steps to ensure the reliability of employees who have access to personal data.
* Only employees who may be required to assist in meeting the obligations under this agreement may have access to the personal data.
* Any disclosure of personal data must be made in confidence and extend only so far as that which is specifically necessary for the purposes of this agreement.
* You must ensure that there are appropriate security measures in place to safeguard against any unauthorised access or unlawful processing or accidental loss, destruction or damage or disclosure of the personal data.
* On termination of this agreement, for whatever reason, the personal data must be returned to us promptly and safely, together with all copies in your possession or control.

**General Data Protection Regulations 2018**

For the purposes of the Regulations the Authority is the data processor.

The personal information that we have asked you provide on individuals (data subjects) that will be working for you on this contract will be used in compiling the tender list and in assessing your offer. If you are unsuccessful the information will be held and destroyed within two years of the award of contracts. If you are awarded a contract, it will be retained for the duration of the contract and destroyed within seven years of the contract’s expiry.

We may monitor the performance of the individuals during the execution of the contract, and the results of our monitoring, together with the information that you have provided, will be used in determining what work is allocated under the contract, and in any renewal of the contract or in the award of future contracts of a similar nature. The information will not be disclosed to anyone outside the Authority without the consent of the data subject, unless the Authority is required by law to make such disclosures.

**Equality, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI)**

The Client is striving to create a diverse and inclusive working environment where every individual has equality of opportunity to progress and to apply their unique insights to making the UK a great place for living. The Service Provider is expected to respect this commitment in all dealings with Natural England staff and service users.

Suppliers are expected to:

* support Defra group to achieve its Public Sector Equality Duty as defined by the Equality Act 2010, and to support delivery of [Defra group’s Equality & Diversity Strategy](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/defra-group-equality-diversity-and-inclusion-strategy-2020-to-2024/defra-group-equality-diversity-and-inclusion-strategy-2020-to-2024).
* meet the standards set out in the [Government’s Supplier Code of Conduct](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/supplier-code-of-conduct)
* work with Defra group to ensure equality, diversity and inclusion impacts are addressed (positive and negative) in the goods, services and works we procure, barriers are removed, and opportunities realised.

**Sustainable Procurement**

Addressing global sustainability impacts and realising additional community benefits within commercial activity is core to Defra group’s approach, working with its supply chain is key to achieving sustainable outcomes. In addition to supporting Defra group to meet its outcomes we look to understand and reduce negative sustainability impacts associated with our commercial activity and realise benefits.

The Client encourages its suppliers to share these values, work to address negative impacts and realise opportunities, measure performance and success.

Suppliers are expected to, have an understanding, of the Sustainable Development Goals, the interconnections between them and the relevance to the Goods, Services and works procured on the Client’s behalf.

**Conflicts of Interest**

The concept of a conflict of interest includes but is not limited to any situation where an Involved Person or Relevant Body has directly or indirectly, a financial, economic or other personal interest which might be perceived to compromise their impartiality and independence in the context of the procurement procedure and/or affect the integrity of the contract award.

We expect suppliers to mitigate appropriately against any real or perceived conflict of interest through their work with government. A supplier with a position of influence gained through a contract should not use that position to unfairly disadvantage any other supplier or reduce the potential for future competition.

Where the supplier is aware of any circumstances giving rise to a conflict of interest or has any indication that a conflict of interest exists or may arise you should inform the Authority of this as soon as possible (whether before or after they have submitted a quotation). Tenderers should remain alert to the possibility of conflicts of interest arising at all stages of the procurement and should update the Authority if any new circumstances or information arises, or there are any changes to information already provided to the Authority. Failure to do so, and/or to properly manage any conflicts of interest may result in a quotation being rejected.

Provided that it has been carried out in an open, fair and transparent manner, routine pre-market engagement carried out by the Authority should not represent a conflict of interest for the supplier.

**Section 2: The Invitation**

**Specification of Requirements**

**Background**

Baseline monitoring of Dartmoor ESA moorland vegetation was established in 1994 and originally comprised two complimentary methods both initially undertaken at 50 random points or sites across the whole of the moorland resource (Section 3 moorland), i.e., a representative sample of Dartmoor moorland irrespective of designated site and agri-environment scheme (AES) agreement status (Smallshire and others 1997). The methods involved surveying ‘ADAS plot**s**’ or ‘stands’ (8 m x 4 m) comprising a fixed block of 32 ‘nested quadrats’ or ‘nests’ (Critchley & Poulton 1998) from which a series of radiating 60 m long ‘heather grazing transects’ were surveyed using a method developed by ADAS for ESA monitoring (Poulton 1991) described by RDS (2020).

Resurveys were carried out in 1997 (ADAS 1998), 2003 (Kirkham and others 2005) and 2010 (the last just of Forest of Dartmoor plots/transects, Poulton 2010, Wheeler & Wilson 2010). Additional plots/transects were added on agreement land in 1997 (14) and in the Forest in 2003 (13) resulting in a total of 77 sites.

Note – all references can be found at Appendix 3.

**Aims and objectives**

The purpose of this project is to resurvey the radiating heather grazing transects from the 50 sample points originally surveyed in 1994 (i.e., not the plots and not the additional sites added after 1984).

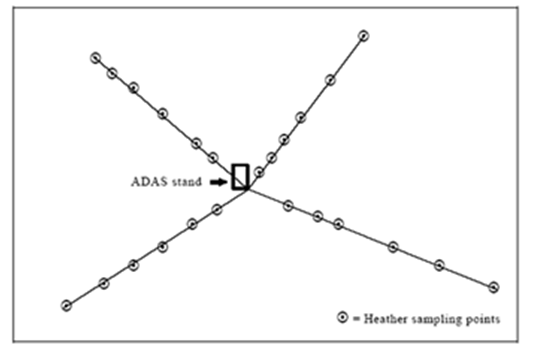
The resurvey will in general follow the method developed for Environmentally Sensitive Area (ESA) moorland heather grazing monitoring first carried out on Dartmoor in 1994 (Smallshire and others 1997, RDS 2002). It involves the collection of data on a range of variables related to grazing impacts and dwarf shrub height and cover. In previous surveys, detailed vegetation composition data have also been collected from permanent plots located within the same sites, but these will not be resurveyed under this project.

**Methodology**

For various reasons (e.g., recent ‘wildfire’ damage, relocation issues with plots, and the exclusion of sites with insufficient heather from transects in the first, 1997 resurvey), not all sites were resurveyed in all years (though this affected the transects less than the plots).

All surveys were carried out in late winter/early spring reflecting a focus on assessing the impact of grazing over the preceding autumn/winter period. Transects were set out on random bearings from the central point with six sample points at random distances along them (Figure 1).

Advantages of this methodology include that it is a more rapid and less resource intensive the ADAS plots, it does not require as accurate relocation (sampling within a larger c. 1 ha area) and is particularly targeted on grazing intensity/effects and dwarf shrubs which are key current issues on Dartmoor moorland.



**Figure 1**. Random heather sampling transects and sample points centred around an ASA plot

Up to four heather stems will be collected from plants touching the outside edge of the corners or inside closest to the corners of each of four sample 1 m × 1 m quadrats per transect. This is done by cutting heather stems with secateurs usually to give three to four years growth). When no heather is present within the quadrat, it is ‘flipped’ up to two twice (in a set order) to maximise the number of heather samples (at least one stem and up to four stems per quadrat). This gives up to 24 samples per site.

To achieve a minimum target of 12 heather samples per site, if necessary, up to four additional transects will be sampled (one at a time until 12 samples are achieved) when the original transects yielded between 5 and 11 heather samples (but not when fewer). Transect bearings and distances to sample quadrats need to be re-randomised for the resurvey. Unless assessed within a few days, the collected heather samples need to be stored in a fridge and the heather Grazing Index (GI, the percentage of shoots grazed) determined post or concurrent with the survey using a cutting technique and determination of whether cut shoots are grazed, ungrazed, or ‘indeterminate’ (RDS 2002, pp 6-9).

Additional variables to be recorded from the original quadrat positions (prior to any flipping) are listed in Table 1 below.

**Table 1**. Additional variables recorded from the original quadrat position

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Variable** | **Measurement** |
| Heather age | Estimated in years (count growth increments down stem) |
| Heather growth stage | **P**ioneer, **B**uilding or **M**ature/degenerate (amalgamated) judgement |
| Heather cover | Estimated percentage |
| Total ‘dwarf shrub’ cover | Estimated percentage including *Calluna, Erica* spp*., Vaccinium* spp*., Empetrum* (scarce on Dartmoor) and *Ulex gallii.* |
| Dwarf shrub height | To nearest 0.5 cm from closest to 4 set positions using a sward stick |
| Livestock droppings/dung | Presence (Y/N) in quadrat for sheep and cattle/ponies amalgamated |
| Pulled heather stems | Presence (Y/N) |
| Broad vegetation type | **M**ire, **H**eath, **F**ragmented heath, **A**cid grassland, other (**X**) |

The locations of the moorland plots and hence the origin of the transects were recorded with hand-held GPS (as well as by bearings and distances from fixed points and were photographed). Natural England will provide the contractor with documentation to assist in the relocation of the origin of the transects using GPS.

In the case of plots in the MoD ranges on the north moor, the surveyors may be required to be accompanied by an MoD staff member to locate the sites (in view of the possible danger from buried ammunition); Natural England will liaise with the MoD to arrange this if necessary.

**Requirements**

The contract is just to carry out fieldwork and heather shoot grazing (GI) assessments and provision the data from them.

Potential contractors are asked to submit a tender for fieldwork data collection and assessment of the heather grazing index from stems collected in the field as described above and below. Reporting will be limited to providing a brief report giving feedback on the fieldwork undertaken, the findings and any issues encountered, together with the provision of data for the variables assessed I the field and the heather GI assessments for each of the samples within each site. This is likely to be on field forms to be supplied by Natural England (based on those used in 2010, (Wheeler & Wilson 2010, Appendix 1, p 23) and in spreadsheet form or possibly to be input into a database module to be provided by Natural England.

In summary the fieldwork requirement is to resurvey groups of transects within 50 (1 ha) sample sites across Dartmoor moorland. These were first located and surveyed in 1994 using the method developed by ADAS for ESA monitoring described in RDS (2002) based on Poulton (1991) and in the previous survey reports (see above and references). The sites and samples comprise a range of open moorland habitat types including blanket bog, wet and dry heath, and acid grassland but generally exclude woodland, scrub, dense bracken, and valley mire. Betweenfour and eight transects (each with six sample quadrats) will be surveyed with target of getting at least 12 samples with heather. Representative digital photographs should be taken of the general area and to illustrate any particular management and other impacts and/or other features of each site with location details and descriptions. The methodology for the resurvey will be the same as previous surveys and will utilise the heather grazing index method (Poulton 1991 as described by RDS 2002) developed by ADAS specifically for ESA monitoring. Minor differences from the method described by RDS (2002) will be agreed with Natural England.

In outline, the heather grazing assessment method involves the collection of four sample stems from each quadrat to be subsequently assessed for grazing on shoots. The heather Grazing Index, the percentage of shoots grazed, is assessed indoors post-survey. Each of the stems collected is cut 4 cm from the crown to yield a sample of shoots. Any shoots less than 1 cm in length are discarded and the remainder are classified as grazed, ungrazed or indeterminate (tip lost/damaged but possibly not grazed). GI is calculated as the maximum GI, i.e., the total number of grazed plus indeterminate shoots as a percentage of the total number of shoots present. These assessments are made on the previous year’s growth and any new shoot growth is ignored. This assessment can be tricky and subject to observer variation. Training (which Natural England will contribute to) and quality control measures are therefore essential, as ideally is experience of the method by at least one of the team members (contact David Glaves for further information).

Natural England will provide:

* Details to enable relocation of the transect origin for the 50 sites.
* Necessary access permissions. (Please note that access information is confidential and is only given for purpose of this project. Our general terms and conditions of contract place specific requirements on the successful contractor in relation to this).
* Guidance from a Natural England project manager and other staff involved in the project, including a project initiation meeting, and training in the field and on heather grazing index assessments.

The successful contractor(s) will:

* Relocate the origin and resurvey the 50 existing heather transects groups located across Dartmoor moorland.
* Take representative digital photographs of the area of the transects and to illustrate any particular management and other impacts and/or other features of each site.
* Store stems collected in the field in a freezer and carry out assessments of the previous winter season’s grazing on heather to produce a heather Grazing Index as soon as possible after collection.
* Supply completed field data forms for variables assessed in the field and the heather grazing index assessment results for each of the samples within each site and in spreadsheet form or possibly to be input into a database module to be provided by Natural England.
* Produce a brief report on the fieldwork and findings including identification of any issues encountered.

**Document format**

The Intellectual Property Rights resulting from the work shall belong to Natural England.

Maps, plans, illustrations, matrixes and photographs must be full colour where original

material is in colour or where colour is essential to preparation of new, illustrative material.

The cover of all reports or drawings will include a statement © Natural England and the date of creation.

Copies of field data forms and reports (draft and final versions) must be provided in Microsoft Excel and Microsoft Word format.

The final report must meet Government’s accessibility for publishing standards, see:

[Accessible documents policy - Natural England - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)](https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/natural-england/about/accessible-documents-policy). The Public Sector Bodies Accessibility Regulations mean that public bodies such as Natural England cannot publish content on GOV.UK that is not compliant with the accessibility policy.

The supplier must comply with [Natural England publishing standards for commissioned reports (NECR000)](http://nepubprod.appspot.com/publication/5790636781600768) and use the report template provided on the page, following the guidance within it. The supplier must not make any changes to the templates, including to heading styles and font sizes.

Spatial data must be in ESRI Shapefile or Geodatabase (v10.2.2 with a .lyr file) format and must have been through the [Esri Check Geometry](https://desktop.arcgis.com/en/arcmap/10.7/tools/data-management-toolbox/check-geometry.htm) tool.

Any data reproduced in all or in part, in the works the supplier submits, or used to derive the work must open access or be owned by or licensed to Natural England.

You can request to use data held by Natural England and complete some of our contractor licenses at <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/how-to-access-natural-englands-maps-and-data#request-data.>

The supplier must provide Natural England with details of any third-party data consulted or incorporated, and the processes used either within the report, or in the Lineage section of the metadata (see Outputs).

**Contract Management** **and timescales**

* Tenders should be received by the date specified in the Invitation to Tender document.
* A project inception meeting by video call (e.g., MS Teams) within the first two weeks of the project start. All costs associated with attending the inception meeting must be incorporated into the fixed price.

* The successful Tenderer must identify individuals who will manage the project and nominate a representative for day-to-day contact with Natural England’s project officer.
* Contact by MS Teams or email with project officer every two weeks providing updates on progress and any issues.

Natural England must be alerted in a timely manner should any unforeseen cost or delays be predicted.

Key timescales:

* + Within 2 week of start – Two-hour inception meeting between project officer, steering group and supplier by video call (e.g., MS Teams).
  + Fieldwork to be carried out between February and April 2024.
  + By 31st May 2024 - Field data including heather grazing index assessments to be submitted.
  + By 31st May 2024 – Fieldwork report and any other documentation and digital photos to be submitted.

Key progress and completion dates may be amended by mutual agreement between Natural England and the successful contractor. The successful contractor will be requested to submit at least one interim invoice during the lifetime of the contract (before end of March 2024) for work completed to that date to enable part payment within the financial year 2023-24.

Prices will remain fixed for the duration of the contract award period. We may at our sole discretion extend this contract to include related or further work. Any extension shall be agreed in advance of any work commencing and may be subject to further competition.

**Payment**

The Authority will raise purchase orders to cover the cost of the services and will issue to the awarded supplier following contract award.

The Authority’s preference is for all invoices to be sent electronically, quoting a valid Purchase Order number. Invoices can be submitted after each key project milestone has been satisfactorily completed. Key project milestones will be agreed at the initial project inception meeting.

It is anticipated that this contract will be awarded for a period of6 monthsto end no later than 31st May 2024. Prices will remain fixed for the duration of the contract award period. We may at our sole discretion extend this contract to include related or further work. Any extension shall be agreed in writing in advance of any work commencing and may be subject to further competition.

**Evaluation Methodology**

We will award this contract in line with the most economically advantageous tender (MEAT) as set out in the following award criteria:

Technical – **60%**

Commercial) – **40**%

Evaluation criteria

Evaluation weightings are **60**% technical and **40**% commercial, the winning tenderer will be the highest scoring combined score.

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| Award Criteria | Weighting (%) | Evaluation Topic & Weighting | Sub-Criteria | Weighted Question |
| **Technical** | **60%** | **Proposal** | **Relevant experience and key personnel** | **1 Question**  **Q1** Provide documentary evidence of, and references for, previous commissions and past performance in similar contracts in the last 5 years, including curriculum vitae of the personnel to be involved in the work, with details of their suitability and experience of similar relevant projects and commissions, including both technical and project management skills. **(40% of technical score available)** |
| **Technical skills/expertise** | **1 Question**  **Q2** Please demonstrate your knowledge and understanding of moorland vegetation and grazing surveys **(40% of technical score available)** |
| **Management of sustainability and social value** | **1 Question**  **Q3** Please provide details of your policies/procedures with regard to biosecurity and delivery of this project. Describe your organisation’s approach to sustainability and how this will be managed and adopted throughout the project **(10% of technical score available)** |
|  |  |  | **Health and safety** | **1 Question**  **Q4** Please identify and describe how you will manage any Health and Safety issues associated with this project. **(10% of technical score available)** |
| **Commercial** | **40%** | **Whole life cost of the proposed Contract** | **Commercial Model** | **1 Question**  **Q5** Provide details of all costs required to deliver the requirements of this project **(40% of commercial score available)** |

**Technical (60%)**

Technical evaluations will be based on responses to specific questions covering key criteria which are outlined below. Scores for questions will be based on the following:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Description | Score | Definition |
| Very good | 100 | Addresses all the Authority’s requirements with all the relevant supporting information set out in the RFQ. 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 RFQ. 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 RFQ. 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. |

Technical evaluation is assessed using the evaluation topics and sub-criteria stated in the Evaluation Criteria section above.

Separate submissions for each technical question should be provided and will be evaluated in isolation. Tenderers should provide answers that meet the criteria of each technical question.

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| **Relevant experience and key personnel** | Detailed Evaluation Criteria |
| **Q1** Provide documentary evidence of, and references for, previous commissions and past performance in similar contracts in the last 5 years, including curriculum vitae of the personnel to be involved in the work, with details of their suitability and experience of similar relevant projects and commissions, including both technical and project management skills. | Your response should provide information about your key personnel who will be directly involved with this contract, their role and time allocation for the elements of the project and their expertise and experience with specific reference to the upland terrestrial habitats - blanket bog and other mires/fens; wet and dry heath; and acid grassland, specifically:   1. Evidence of successful completion of similar projects undertaken in the last 5 years, demonstrating the qualities listed above; and 2. Names and CV’s, of individuals who will undertake the work and details of any sub-contractors to be used (if applicable), their technical qualifications and any relevant publications.   Your response should also include a table outlining the time allocation for each individual for the different elements of the project. CVs should be 1 page of A4 in 12pt Arial Font, and detail how the experience of the named person is relevant to the tasks outlined in the specification. |

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| **Technical skills / expertise** | Detailed Evaluation Criteria |
| **Q2.** Please demonstrate your knowledge and understanding of moorland vegetation and grazing surveys | We are looking for evidence of expertise and extensive experience of:   1. Understanding and experience of moorland vegetation surveys. 2. Understanding and experience of moorland grazing surveys. 3. Assessment of browsing on heather shoots, ideally using the ADAS/RDS heather grazing index (GI) method from stem samples collected in the field for later assessment off-site indoors.   Responses should not exceed four sides of A4, in 12pt Arial font. |

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| --- | --- |
| **Management of sustainability and social value** | Detailed Evaluation Criteria |
| **Q3** Please provide details of your policies/procedures with regard to biosecurity and delivery of this project. Describe your organisation’s approach to sustainability and how this will be managed and adopted throughout the project. | As a delivery partner, the successful contractor is expected to pursue sustainability in their operations, thereby ensuring Natural England is not contracting with a supplier whose operational outputs run contrary to Natural England’s objectives. The successful contractor will need to approach the project with a focus on the entire life cycle of the project. Contractors must take adequate biosecurity precautions to ensure that the risk of spreading disease, pests and INNS is minimised. Your response should provide a copy of your employer’s environmental policy and any environmental accreditation schemes such as ISO 14001 or EMAS which they have been awarded or are working towards.  References from previous works where sustainability was integrated throughout delivery should also be provided, e.g.   * Transport * Waste * Recycling and renewable energy |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Health & Safety** | Detailed Evaluation Criteria |
| **Q4** Please identify and describe how you will manage any Health and Safety issues associated with this project. | Your response should provide a copy of your employer’s health and safety policy, professional indemnity insurance, public liability insurance and employer’s liability insurance. A draft/proposed Health and Safety Risk Assessment for the contract should also be provided with particular emphasis on field work. Information should also be provided on your companies lone working practices. |

**Commercial (40%)**

The Contract is to be awarded as a 'fixed price' which will be paid according to the completion of the deliverables stated in the Specification of Requirements. The fixed price should include all costs including staff time, hourly rates for meetings, field work, report preparation, producing GI outputs, etc., or equipment if needed, and any expenses. There will be no allowance for adding in these costs later.

Suppliers are required to submit a ‘total cost’ to provide the deliverables stated in the Specification of Requirements. In addition to this the Commercial Response template must be completed to provide a breakdown of the whole life costs against each task required to deliver the outputs and the key personnel used in the delivery of those tasks.

Please complete Table 1, below, to show a breakdown of your cost per task or unit of time (i.e., ‘rates’) and the number of tasks or days / hours for each task, and total cost for each task required to deliver the outputs. You may insert additional task lines if required.

**Table 1: Commercial Response (to be completed by Supplier)**

| **Descriptions of Tasks** | **Cost per task  / or Cost per Hour / Day (i.e. rate)** | **No of tasks / Hours / Days** | **Key delivery personnel for each task** | **Total Cost per task** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  |  |  |  | £ |
|  |  |  |  | £ |
|  |  |  |  | £ |
|  |  |  |  | £ |
|  |  |  |  | £ |
|  |  |  |  | £ |
|  |  |  |  | £ |
|  |  |  |  | £ |
|  |  |  |  | £ |
|  |  |  |  | £ |
| **Total Costs** | | | | **£** |
| VAT | | | | £ |
| Expenses or other costs (please detail type, e.g., travel, accommodation, subsistence, consumables, etc) | | | | |
|  | | | | £ |
|  | | | | £ |
|  | | | | £ |
|  | | | | £ |
|  | | | | £ |
|  | | | | £ |
|  | | | |  |
| **Total Overall Price** | | | | **£** |

**Calculation Method**

The method for calculating the weighted scores is as follows:

**Commercial (as per Commercial Response table)**

Score = (Lowest Quotation Price / Supplier’s Quotation Price) x **[40%]** (Maximum available marks)

**Technical (as per Natural England’s assessment of supplier’s tender)**

Score = (Supplier’s Total Technical Score / Highest Technical Score) x **[60%]** (Maximum available marks)

The total score (weighted) (TWS) is then calculated by adding the total weighted commercial score (WC) to the total weighted technical score (WT): WC + WT = TWS. The contract will be offered to the tenderer/supplier scoring the highest TWS.

**Information to be returned**

Please note, the following information requested must be provided. Incomplete tender submissions may be discounted.

Please complete and return the following information:

* completed Commercial Response template
* separate response submission for each technical question (in accordance with the response instructions)
* completed Mandatory Requirements (Annex 1
* completed Acceptance of Terms and Conditions (Annex 2)

**Award**

Once the evaluation of the Response(s) is complete all suppliers will be notified of the outcome via email.

The successful supplier will be issued the contract via a Purchase Order.

**Annex 1 Mandatory Requirements**

**Part 1 Potential Supplier Information**

Please answer the following self-declaration questions in full and include this Annex in your quotation response.

**Part 1.1 Potential Supplier Information:**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Question no. | Question | Response |
| 1.1(a) | Full name of the potential supplier submitting the information |  |
| 1.1(b) | Registered office address (if applicable) |  |
| 1.1(c) | Company registration number (if applicable) |  |
| 1.1(d) | Charity registration number (if applicable) |  |
| 1.1(e) | Head office DUNS number (if applicable) |  |
| 1.1(f) | Registered VAT number |  |
| 1.1(g) | Are you a Small, Medium or Micro Enterprise (SME)? | (Yes / No) |

Note: See EU definition of SME <https://ec.europa.eu/growth/smes/business-friendly-environment/sme-definition_en>

**Part 1.2 Contact details and declaration**

By submitting a quotation to this RFQ I declare that to the best of my knowledge the answers submitted, and information contained in this document are correct and accurate.

I declare that, upon request and without delay you will provide the certificates or documentary evidence referred to in this document.

I understand that the information will be used in the selection process to assess my organisation’s suitability to be invited to participate further in this procurement.

I understand that the authority may reject this submission in its entirety if there is a failure to answer all the relevant questions fully, or if false/misleading information or content is provided in any section.

I am aware of the consequences of serious misrepresentation.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Question no. | Question | Response |
| 1.2(a) | Contact name |  |
| 1.2(b) | Name of organisation |  |
| 1.2(c) | Role in organisation |  |
| 1.2(d) | Phone number |  |
| 1.2(e) | E-mail address |  |
| 1.2(f) | Postal address |  |
| 1.2(g) | Signature (electronic is acceptable) |  |
| 1.2(h) | Date |  |

**Part 2 Exclusion Grounds**

**Part 2.1 Grounds for mandatory exclusion**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Question no. | Question | Response |
| 2.1(a) | Please indicate if, within the past five years you, your organisation or any other person who has powers of representation, decision or control in the organisation been convicted anywhere in the world of any of the offences within the summary below. | |
|  | Participation in a criminal organisation. | (Yes / No)  If yes please provide details at 2.1 (b) |
|  | Corruption. | ((Yes / No)  If yes please provide details at 2.1 (b) |
|  | Fraud. | (Yes / No)  If yes please provide details at 2.1 (b) |
|  | Terrorist offences or offences linked to terrorist activities | (Yes / No)  If yes please provide details at 2.1 (b) |
|  | Money laundering or terrorist financing | (Yes / No)  If yes please provide details at 2.1 (b) |
|  | Child labour and other forms of trafficking in human beings | (Yes / No)  If yes please provide details at 2.1 (b) |
| 2.1(b) | If you have answered yes to question 2.1(a), please provide further details.  Date of conviction, specify which of the grounds listed the conviction was for, and the reasons for conviction.  Identity of who has been convicted.  If the relevant documentation is available electronically, please provide the web address, issuing authority, precise reference of the documents. |  |
| 2.1 (c) | If you have answered Yes to any of the points above have measures been taken to demonstrate the reliability of the organisation despite the existence of a relevant ground for exclusion? (i.e. Self-Cleaning) | (Yes / No) |
| 2.1(d) | Has it been established, for your organisation by a judicial or administrative decision having final and binding effect in accordance with the legal provisions of any part of the United Kingdom or the legal provisions of the country in which the organisation is established (if outside the UK), that the organisation is in breach of obligations related to the payment of tax or social security contributions? | (Yes / No) |
| 2.1(e) | If you have answered yes to question 2.3(a), please provide further details. Please also confirm you have paid or have entered into a binding arrangement with a view to paying, the outstanding sum including where applicable any accrued interest and/or fines. |  |

**Part 2.2 Grounds for discretionary exclusion**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Question no. | Question | Response |
| 2.2(a) | The detailed grounds for discretionary exclusion of an organisation are set out on this [webpage](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/551130/List_of_Mandatory_and_Discretionary_Exclusions.pdf), which should be referred to before completing these questions.  Please indicate if, within the past three years, anywhere in the world any of the following situations have applied to you, your organisation or any other person who has powers of representation, decision or control in the organisation | |
| 2.2(b) | Breach of environmental obligations? | (Yes / No)  If yes please provide details at 2.2 (f) |
| 2.2(c) | Breach of social obligations? | (Yes / No)  If yes please provide details at 2.2 (f) |
| 2.2(d) | Breach of labour law obligations? | (Yes / No)  If yes please provide details at 2.2 (f) |
| 2.2(e) | Shown significant or persistent deficiencies in the performance of a substantive requirement under a prior public contract, a prior contract with a contracting entity, or a prior concession contract, which led to early termination of that prior contract, damages, or other comparable sanctions? | (Yes / No)  If yes please provide details at 2.2 (f) |
| 2.2 (f) | If you have answered Yes to any of the above, explain what measures been taken to demonstrate the reliability of the organisation despite the existence of a relevant ground for exclusion? (Self-Cleaning) |  |

**Annex 2 Acceptance of Terms and Conditions**

I/We accept in full the terms and conditions appended to this Request for Quote document.

Company \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Print Name \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Position \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Annex 3 References**

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