



# Invitation to Quote

**Invitation to Quote (ITQ) on behalf of UKRI - Research England**

**Subject: Understanding the perception of the REF among researchers**

**Sourcing Reference Number: CR19078**

**UK Shared Business Services Ltd (UK SBS)**  
[www.uksbs.co.uk](http://www.uksbs.co.uk)

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Version 4.0

**UKSBS**  
*Shared Business Services*

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# Section 1 – About UK Shared Business Services

## Putting the business into shared services

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

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

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

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

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

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

## Our Customers

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

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

## **Privacy Statement**

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

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

- We will keep your data safe and private.
- We will not sell your data to anyone.

- We will only share your data with those you give us permission to share with and only for legitimate service delivery reasons.

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

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**

# **Research England**

Research England is a new council within UK Research and Innovation, operating from April 2018. As a key component of the research funding system, Research England will oversee UK Research and Innovation's England-only functions in relation to university research and knowledge exchange. This includes providing grant funding to English universities for research and knowledge exchange activities; developing and implementing the Research Excellence Framework in partnership with the UK Higher Education funding bodies; overseeing the sustainability of the Higher Education research base in England; overseeing the £900 million UK Research Partnership Investment Fund; and the Higher Education Innovation Fund (HEIF).

<https://re.ukri.org>

## Section 3 - Working with the Contracting Authority.

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

Section 3 – Contact details		
3.1	Contracting Authority Name and address	Research England Nicholson House Lime Kiln Close Stoke Gifford Bristol BS34 8SR
3.2	Buyer name	Victoria Clewer
3.3	Buyer contact details	research@uksbs.co.uk
3.4	Maximum value of the Opportunity	£128,000.00 excluding VAT
3.5	Process for the submission of clarifications and Bids	<b>All correspondence shall be submitted within the Emptoris e-sourcing tool. Guidance Notes to support the use of Emptoris is available <a href="#">here</a>. 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.</b>

Section 3 - Timescales		
3.6	Date of Issue of Contract Advert and location of original Advert	Tuesday, 1 <sup>st</sup> October 2019 Contracts Finder
3.7	Latest date/time ITQ clarification questions shall be received through Emptoris messaging system	Tuesday, 15 <sup>th</sup> October 2019 11:00
3.8	Latest date/time ITQ clarification answers should be sent to all Bidders by the Buyer through Emptoris	Thursday, 17 <sup>th</sup> October 2019
3.9	Latest date/time ITQ Bid shall be submitted through Emptoris	Thursday, 31 <sup>st</sup> October 2019 11:00
3.10	Clarifications (if required)	Thursday, 7 <sup>th</sup> November 2019
3.11	Anticipated notification date of successful and unsuccessful Bids	Friday, 15 <sup>th</sup> November 2019
3.12	Anticipated Award date	Friday, 15 <sup>th</sup> November 2019
3.13	Anticipated Contract Start date	Monday, 2 <sup>nd</sup> December 2019
3.14	Anticipated Contract End date	Tuesday, 30 <sup>th</sup> June 2020
3.15	Bid Validity Period	60 Days

## Section 4 – Specification

### Background

#### Why this topic?

The Research Excellence Framework (REF) is a major exercise undertaken by the four UK higher education funding bodies: Research England (prior to 1 April 2018 the funding body for England was the Higher Education Funding Council for England); the Higher Education Funding Council for Wales; the Scottish Funding Council; and the Department for the Economy in Northern Ireland.

The REF is a significant policy instrument for driving research excellence across the UK. It comes under regular scrutiny by the academic and policy communities. As a result it is important that the instrument is open and transparent in its development, delivery and evaluation.

In 2015-16 the REF was subject to an external independent review “Research Excellence Framework (REF) review: Building on success and learning from experience” (Appendix A) which resulted in a series of recommendations to refine the instrument to better meet its core policy objectives and address some sector concerns around cost, burden and unintended consequences. The development of policy responses and process implementation of the recommendations have been subject to extensive consultation with the sector and REF panels.

The REF has undergone a number of significant changes in its development for REF2021 in response to the Stern review and wider consultation. In order to ensure that UK funding bodies continue to implement policy which is informed by evidence it is essential that we evaluate the process of the exercise, the products of the process and the effectiveness of the changes made.

#### Research England

Research England shapes healthy, dynamic research and knowledge exchange in English universities. We are responsible for funding, engaging with and understanding these institutions, and working with devolved funding bodies and the Office for Students to understand their strategies, capabilities and capacity. We distribute over £2.2 billion to universities in England every year, principally through quality-related research (QR) funding, and the Higher Education Innovation Fund, as well as c. £180m in formula-based research capital. We are responsible, on behalf of the four UK funding bodies, for administering the Research Excellence Framework, which we use to inform QR funding, and for delivering the forthcoming Knowledge Exchange Framework.

The Higher Education and Research Act 2017 established Research England as a Council of UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) alongside the other existing Councils (the seven Research Councils and Innovate UK).

#### Higher Education Funding Council for Wales

Our mission is to develop and sustain internationally excellent higher education in Wales, for the benefit of individuals, society and the economy, in Wales and more widely.

We regulate fee levels at universities, ensure a framework is in place for assessing the quality of higher education and scrutinise the performance of universities and other

designated providers.

We use resources from the Welsh Government and others to secure higher education (HE) learning and research of the highest quality, make the most of the contribution of HE to Wales's culture, society and economy and ensure high quality, accredited teacher training.

#### Scottish Funding Council

The Scottish Funding Council (SFC) is helping make Scotland the best place in the world to educate, to research and to innovate. Investing around £1.8 billion of public money each year, SFC's funding enables Scotland's colleges and universities to provide life-changing opportunities for over half a million people.

Our support for university research means every one of Scotland's 19 universities is able to carry out world-leading research. Our investment of over £120m to create innovation centres is making exciting things happen between industry and university research. Our work in widening access is bringing colleges and universities together in new ways and providing more people with more routes into learning and skills.

#### Department for the Economy, Northern Ireland

The role of the Department's higher education division is to formulate policy and administer funding to support education, research and related activities in the Northern Ireland higher education sector.

An aim of the Department is to develop and sustain a higher education research sector that holds a strong position within the UK and beyond and makes a major contribution to economic and social well-being. The Department provides research funding for the Northern Ireland universities through a range of mechanisms. The majority of year on year or recurrent research funding is distributed by reference to quality as assessed by performance in the most recent research assessment exercise, the Research Excellence Framework (REF) 2014.

### **Aims and Objectives of the Project**

This document invites tenders to undertake a full evaluation of REF2021 on behalf of the UK's four funding bodies. The package will include a mixed-methods approach and should include consultation with researchers, HEI managers and other university staff involved in the REF.

This study will build on and scale up the Real-Time REF Review pilot study from 2019 (working paper and executive summary) (appendix B) which gathered initial data and tested the feasibility of conducting a longitudinal study into academic and managerial attitudes towards the REF.

The full evaluation should:

- Provide confirmation at scale of the findings from the pilot;
- Assess in detail the embedding of key REF policies, especially changes introduced in REF2021, including:
  - Open access
  - The implementation of codes of practice (to include approaches to identifying independence; significant responsibility for research and output selection)
  - ED&I



- Number of outputs
- Portability of outputs
- Increased weighting of impact case studies

- Build on learning from the pilot, both in terms of data collection and methodological approach, seeking sufficient continuity to allow for comparisons between findings from both studies;
- Broaden the research sample including and beyond the four HEIs and 8 Units of Assessment (UoAs) in the pilot.

Researchers are asked to apply a mixed methods approach using survey and interviews. We welcome suggestions additional to this methodology to enable the highest quality data and analysis.

The study will be supported and informed by the expertise and guidance of an independent steering group which will convene and be consulted at key stages of the project's delivery. The devolved funding bodies will support recruitment of steering group members (including group Chair). Research England will provide scheduling and secretariat support for steering group meetings. The successful contractor should input into the structure and focus of steering group meetings.

The primary output will be a written report to Research England, the Higher Education Funding Council for Wales, the Scottish Funding Council and the Department for the Economy, Northern Ireland. The report will contain clearly presented, detailed analysis of data gathered through the survey and interviews. The report will be published. Additional methods of disseminating the outcomes of the report (to complement the publication of the written report) may be considered. Research England will work closely with the project team throughout and will require frequent progress updates by email and/or telephone

### **Suggested Methodology**

Bidders are asked to design a methodology which includes a quantitative survey of academics and qualitative interviews with research managers and other HEI staff. The survey and interview question sets should be developed and expanded from those used in the pilot but with sufficient continuity to allow for comparisons between findings from both studies.

A research sample should be designed to be representative across UK institutions, research staff and disciplines, and account for characteristics including:

- Size of institution
- Geographic location
- Broad spread of UoAs
- Research intensity

The sample should include an institutional focus, scaled up from the pilot study, however we encourage bidders to propose ways of accessing additional respondents through alternative routes (e.g. via professional networks) to ensure that the sample is fully representative of the sector.

Bidders should include a statement justifying their approach to the survey sample, including an explanation of why the chosen approach and sample is suitable for analysis, provides sufficient representation across the research landscape and ensures confidence in the conclusions.

Stage	Description of research phases
<b>Phase 1</b> Nov – Dec 2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Statement of work</li> <li>• Inception meeting</li> <li>• Research sample developed</li> </ul>
<b>Phase 2</b> Jan – Feb 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Survey/interview question sets drafted</li> <li>• Steering group meeting 1 – intros, feedback on project plan, research sample and draft survey/interview questions</li> <li>• Sample contacted to take part</li> </ul>
<b>Phase 3</b> Mar – May 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Survey open (6 weeks)</li> <li>• HEI staff interviews conducted</li> <li>• Steering group meeting 2 – to discuss emerging findings</li> </ul>
<b>Phase 4</b> Jun 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Synthesis and report writing</li> <li>• Steering meeting 3 – to discuss final report</li> <li>• Final report for funding bodies sign off</li> </ul>

## Deliverables

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

- Statement of work at commencement of the project outlining the work activities they will undertake, deliverables and timetable. This will be discussed and refined at the inception meeting which will be held week commencing 2 December 2019 at a location to be determined. It is a requirement that project work must begin 2 December 2019. The overall project timeline will run until June 2020.
- Project plan complete with milestones and risk assessment, including levels of risk with owners identified and mitigating actions to address;
- HEI research sample with rationale for selection;
- Draft survey and interview question sets;
- Final web-friendly version of survey;
- Interview question scripts;
- Supporting documents and text for survey and interviews (information sheets, consent forms, text for survey participation invites);
- Attendance and contribution at a minimum of three steering group meetings in London. Contribution to include input into meeting agendas, presenting project updates and findings to group, facilitating discussion and capturing feedback;
- Full draft report for review and sign off by the funding bodies;
- Final report for review and sign off by the funding bodies;

- Weekly progress reports by email or telephone as required which may include outcomes of early analysis and updates to risk register.
- PowerPoint slide deck summarising key findings

The successful contractor will be expected to be in regular communication with the Research England project managers (via email, telephone and face to face meetings as required) to ensure that objectives and milestones are being met and that the project is progressing in scope and on time. The successful contractors should ensure that any potential issues or risks are identified, monitored and managed appropriately by maintaining an updated risk register.

The final report should include:

- Executive summary (standalone version and in full report)
- Method
- Survey findings
- Interview findings
- Analysis
- Data visualisation
- Appendices (survey and interview forms)
- Glossary (if appropriate)
- Original data file (if appropriate)

### **Terms and Conditions**

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

## Section 5 – Evaluation model

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

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

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

Pass / fail criteria		
Questionnaire	Q No.	Question subject
Commercial	SEL1.2	Employment breaches/ Equality
Commercial	SEL3.11	Compliance to Section 54 of the Modern Slavery Act
Commercial	SEL3.12	Cyber Essentials
Commercial	SEL3.13	General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) Act and the Data Protection Act 2018
Commercial	SEL3.14	Data Storage
Commercial	FOI1.1	Freedom of Information Exemptions
Commercial	AW1.1	Form of Bid
Commercial	AW1.3	Certificate of Bona Fide Bid
Commercial	AW3.1	Validation check
Commercial	AW4.1	Contract Terms Part 1
Commercial	AW4.2	Contract Terms Part 2
Commercial	AW6.3	Non-Disclosure Agreement
Price	AW5.1	Maximum Budget
Price	AW5.5	E Invoicing
Price	AW5.6	Implementation of E-Invoicing
Quality	AW6.1	Compliance to the Specification
Quality	AW6.2	Variable Bids

### Scoring criteria

### Evaluation Justification Statement

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

Questionnaire	Q No.	Question subject	Maximum Marks
Price	AW5.2	Price	20%
Quality	Proj1.1	Approach/Methodology	25%
Quality	Proj1.2	Staff to Deliver	15%
Quality	Proj1.3	Understanding the Research Evaluation Framework	25%
Quality	Proj1.4	Project Plan and Timescales	10%
Quality	Proj1.5	Risk Management	5%

## Evaluation of criteria

### Non-Price elements

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

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

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

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

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

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

0	The Question is not answered, or the response is completely unacceptable.
10	Extremely poor response – they have completely missed the point of the question.
20	Very poor response and not wholly acceptable. Requires major revision to the response to make it acceptable. Only partially answers the requirement, with major deficiencies and little relevant detail proposed.
40	Poor response only partially satisfying the selection question requirements with deficiencies apparent. Some useful evidence provided but response falls well short of expectations. Low probability of being a capable supplier.
60	Response is acceptable but remains basic and could have been expanded upon. Response is sufficient but does not inspire.
80	Good response which describes their capabilities in detail which provides high levels of assurance consistent with a quality provider. The response includes a full description of techniques and measurements currently employed.
100	Response is exceptional and clearly demonstrates they are capable of meeting the requirement. No significant weaknesses noted. The response is compelling in its description of techniques and measurements currently employed, providing full assurance consistent with a quality provider.

All questions will be scored based on the above mechanism. Please be aware that the final score returned may be different as there may be multiple evaluators and their individual scores will be averaged (mean) to determine your final score.

### Example

Evaluator 1 scored your bid as 60

Evaluator 2 scored your bid as 60

Evaluator 3 scored your bid as 40

Evaluator 4 scored your bid as 40

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

**Price elements** will be judged on the following criteria.

The lowest price for a response which meets the pass criteria shall score 100.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

## Section 6 – Evaluation questionnaire

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

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

**PLEASE NOTE THE QUESTIONS ARE NOT NUMBERED SEQUENTIALLY**

## Section 7 – General Information

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

#### DO:

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



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

### DO NOT

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

## Some additional guidance notes

- 7.25 All enquiries with respect to access to the e-sourcing tool and problems with functionality within the tool must be submitted to Crown Commercial Service (previously Government Procurement Service), Telephone 0345 010 3503.
- 7.26 Bidders will be specifically advised where attachments are permissible to support a question response within the e-sourcing tool. Where they are not permissible any attachments submitted will not be considered as part of the evaluation process.
- 7.27 Question numbering is not sequential and all questions which require submission are included in the Section 6 Evaluation Questionnaire.
- 7.28 Any Contract offered may not guarantee any volume of work or any exclusivity of supply.
- 7.29 We do not guarantee to award any Contract as a result of this procurement
- 7.30 All documents issued or received in relation to this procurement shall be the property of the Contracting Authority. / UKSBS.
- 7.31 We can amend any part of the procurement documents at any time prior to the latest date / time Bids shall be submitted through Emptoris.
- 7.32 If you are a Consortium you must provide details of the Consortiums structure.
- 7.33 Bidders will be expected to comply with the Freedom of Information Act 2000, or your Bid will be rejected.
- 7.34 Bidders should note the Government's transparency agenda requires your Bid and any Contract entered into to be published on a designated, publicly searchable web site. By submitting a response to this ITQ Bidders are agreeing that their Bid and Contract may be made public
- 7.35 Your bid will be valid for 60 days or your Bid will be rejected.
- 7.36 Bidders may only amend the contract terms during the clarification period only, only if you can demonstrate there is a legal or statutory reason why you cannot accept them. If you request changes to the Contract terms without such grounds and the Contracting Authority fail to accept your legal or statutory reason is reasonably justified, we may reject your Bid.
- 7.37 We will let you know the outcome of your Bid evaluation and where requested will provide a written debrief of the relative strengths and weaknesses of your Bid.
- 7.38 If you fail mandatory pass / fail criteria we will reject your Bid.
- 7.39 Bidders are required to use IE8, IE9, Chrome or Firefox in order to access the functionality of the Emptoris e-sourcing tool.
- 7.40 Bidders should note that if they are successful with their proposal the Contracting Authority reserves the right to ask additional compliancy checks prior to the award of any Contract. In the event of a Bidder failing to meet one of the compliancy checks

the Contracting Authority may decline to proceed with the award of the Contract to the successful Bidder.

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

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

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

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

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

#### **USEFUL INFORMATION LINKS**

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



Appendix A -  
Building on Success



Appendix B - The  
Real-Time REF Review