



## **THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES**

### **PURCHASE OF 3D DIGITAL MICROSCOPE SYSTEM**

#### **INVITATION TO TENDER**

**DEADLINE FOR TENDER SUBMISSIONS - 5PM (UK TIME), 9 FEBRUARY 2024**

## **1 ABOUT US**

- 1.1 The National Archives (TNA) is the official archive and publisher for the UK government, and for England and Wales, holding official records containing 1,000 years of history. Our role is to collect and secure the future of the government record, both digital and physical, to preserve it for generations to come, and to make it as accessible and available as possible. We are a non-ministerial department and our parent department is the Department for Culture, Media and Sport. More information on TNA can be found at [www.nationalarchives.gov.uk](http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk). [Archives for Everyone](#) sets out our plans for the next few years.
- 1.2 TNA holds over 11 million historical and government records, houses approximately 550 staff and currently welcomes approximately 80,000 visitors per year.

## **2 PURPOSE**

2.1 The purpose of this Procurement Exercise is for:

- the purchase of a cutting-edge 3D digital microscope system for advanced documentation, research in archival conservation practices and heritage science applications, with warranty (see Section 3 for details).

2.2 The Appointed Supplier must also:

- provide training to TNA staff in the use of the 3D digital microscope system and software within 2 months of delivery; and
- provide remote support to TNA staff in the use of the microscope and software for at least 5 years after delivery.

2.3 The maximum available budget for this Procurement is £142,000, excluding VAT but inclusive of all other taxes and expenses.

**NOTE: The availability of funds is dependent on TNA being successful in a grant application. If TNA is unsuccessful, this tender will not proceed and no contract will be awarded. Please bear this in mind when considering whether you wish to bid for this opportunity.**

### **3 REQUIREMENTS**

- 3.1 TNA has certain mandatory/minimum requirements. It is essential that your proposal fulfils the criteria below:
- 3.1.1 The 3D digital microscope is able to analyse 2D and 3D objects of variable surface texture and fragility without damaging the object physically or altering it visually. Objects will include but not be limited to books, papers, textiles, photographs, and plastics.
  - 3.1.2 The 3D digital microscope has a versatile/wide magnification range (1 to 10,000 x) suitable for various sample sizes and types and provides a working distance no smaller than 10 mm.
  - 3.1.3 The 3D digital microscope has a wide distortion-free field of view suitable for various sample sizes and types.
  - 3.1.4 The 3D digital microscope needs to be able to capture easily detailed high resolution 3D images across various objects without moving the object. Ability to undertake 360-degree observations of 3D objects is welcome.
  - 3.1.5 The 3D digital microscope needs to be equipped with dimmable VIS and UV illumination and with a backlighting plate for transmitted light image visualisation.
  - 3.1.6 The 3D digital microscope needs to have high precision motorized movement along the X, Y and Z axis, as well as rotation.
  - 3.1.7 The 3D digital microscope needs to offer easy changes in modality and magnifying objectives, reducing human error, limiting risks of damage when used by several users and saving time.
  - 3.1.8 The 3D digital microscope needs to be equipped with a software allowing for 3D profiling and statistics on captured images (particle counts).
  - 3.1.9 The 3D digital microscope requires an intuitive and easy-to-use software interface that allows users of varying expertise levels to operate the microscope efficiently.
  - 3.1.10 The 3D digital microscope requires high-resolution imaging capabilities to capture fine surface details and textures crucial for heritage science analysis.
  - 3.1.11 The 3D digital microscope will come on a dedicated trolley with XYZ motorized axes gantry allowing to image large area and various sample types. The trolley will provide an external arm allowing the imaging of inaccessible areas in non-flat or bulky items that cannot fit within the table/trolley on which the 3D digital microscope will be set up.
  - 3.1.12 The 3D digital microscope will come with a comprehensive documentation and analysis software that enables precise measurements, annotations, and 3D reconstruction.

- 3.1.13 The 3D digital microscope will come with a PC Computer running windows 10 or 11, optimized for digital microscopy application, a 1Tb minimum hard drive, at least 32 Gb RAM.
- 3.1.14 The supplied software will be upgraded as required and free of charge to support any new Windows Operating Systems over a minimum of 5 years after delivery.
- 3.1.15 The supplier provides training to TNA staff in the use of the 3D digital microscope and software within 2 months of delivery.
- 3.1.16 The supplier provides remote support to TNA staff in the use of the 3D digital microscope and software for at least 5 years after delivery.
- 3.1.17 The 3D digital microscope and associated equipment are covered by a 1-year warranty (from date of delivery) during which time any repairs will be made free of charge. Spare parts are guaranteed to be available for repair purposes for a minimum of 5 years after delivery.

## 4 HOW TO RESPOND

4.1 It is for you to determine what format your Tender Response should take so as to describe your offer in a clear, comprehensive fashion. However please ensure your Tender Response includes as a minimum:

4.1.1 a clear demonstration of how your proposed solution meets or exceeds the **criteria** given in Section 3.1.1 to 3.1.14 (a minimum score of 7 is required in this category to be considered for contract award);

4.1.2 your proposals for **training** provision (see Section 3.1.15);

4.1.3 your **Service Level Agreement** (SLA) for your support services (see Section 3.1.16);

4.1.4 details of your **warranty** (see Section 3.1.17);

4.1.5 a description of how you propose to deliver **environmental benefits** in the performance of this contract, to include collaborative ways of working with the supply chain and working towards net zero greenhouse gas emissions. Please ensure that within this proposal you describe clearly how you will achieve your proposed objectives, plus a description of how – and by when - you will implement your commitments and how you plan to monitor, measure and report on the associated impacts; and

4.1.6 your **contract price**.

**Note:** Your submitted contract price must include any and all duties and levies (except UK VAT, which should be excluded) which may be payable on your proposed solution as submitted. If some or all of your proposed solution includes goods or services which are sourced from outside the UK, you must tell us (a) which goods/services are sourced from outside the UK, (b) the associated commodity code(s), (c) the associated duties and levies payable and (d) confirmation that your contract price includes all such duties and levies (except UK VAT). For the avoidance of doubt, your contract price should reflect the equivalent of Incoterm DDP (Delivery Duty Paid) and therefore the full cost to The National Archives should your bid be successful.

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4.1.7 We may require a **demonstration** of your proposed solution (see Section 5.4). Our preference is for demonstrations to take place at TNA's premises in Kew, Richmond, Surrey. If this is not going to be possible, please make clear where a demonstration can take place; reasonable travel by TNA staff at our own expense will be considered.

4.2 If you have any clarification questions related to your Tender Response, please submit these to [procurement@nationalarchives.gov.uk](mailto:procurement@nationalarchives.gov.uk) by **5pm (UK time) on 19 January 2024**.

- 4.3 Please submit your Tender Response to [procurement@nationalarchives.gov.uk](mailto:procurement@nationalarchives.gov.uk) by **5pm (UK time) on 9 February 2024.**

## 5 EVALUATION CRITERIA

5.1 Your Tender Response will be evaluated using the following criteria:

Category	Maximum pre-weighted score	Weighting	Maximum weighted score
<b>Product and system requirements (Section 4.1.1)</b> <b>NOTE: a minimum pre-weighted score of 7 is required in this category to be considered for contract award</b>	10	4	40
<b>Training provision (Section 4.1.2)</b>	10	1	10
<b>Service Level Agreement (Section 4.1.3)</b>	10	1	10
<b>Warranty (Section 4.1.4)</b>	10	1	10
<b>Environmental benefits (Section 4.1.5)</b>	10	1	10
<b>Price (Section 4.1.6)</b>	10	2	20

5.2 Price scores will be evaluated as follows:

The bidder submitting the lowest compliant price will be awarded the maximum of 10 (unweighted) points. All other bidders will be awarded a (unweighted) points score by applying the following formula:

$$((\text{lowest submitted price}/\text{bidder's submitted price}) \times 10)$$

To illustrate this via a worked example:

Bidder 1 submits a price of £10,000

Bidder 2 submits a price of £17,000

Bidder 3 submits a price of £31,000

Bidder 1 is awarded 10 (unweighted) points  $-\left((10,000/10,000) \times 10\right) = 10$

Bidder 2 is awarded 5.88 (unweighted) points  $-\left((10,000/17,000) \times 10\right) = 5.88$

Bidder 3 is awarded 3.23 (unweighted) points  $-\left((10,000/31,000) \times 10\right) = 3.23$

5.3 Other categories will be evaluated according to the table below:

<b>10 Points</b>	<b>Outstanding:</b>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Potential Supplier has provided a response that addresses all parts of the requirement</li> <li>• Potential Supplier has provided evidence to support all elements of their response</li> <li>• The evidence supplied is convincing and highly relevant to the requirement</li> <li>• Potential Supplier's response is clear and easy to understand</li> <li>• Where relevant, Potential Supplier has demonstrated a high level of capability to deliver new and innovative service approaches</li> </ul>
<b>7 Points</b>	<b>Good:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Potential Supplier has provided a response that addresses all parts of the requirement</li> <li>• Potential Supplier has provided evidence to support most elements of their response</li> <li>• The evidence supplied is good and relevant to the requirement</li> <li>• Potential Supplier's response is clear and easy to understand</li> <li>• Where relevant, Potential Supplier has demonstrated some level of capability to deliver new and innovative service approaches</li> </ul>
<b>4 Points</b>	<b>Average:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Potential Supplier has provided a response that addresses some parts of the requirement</li> <li>• Potential Supplier has provided evidence to support some elements of their response, but not all</li> <li>• The evidence supplied has some limited relevance to the requirement</li> <li>• Potential Supplier's response is not always clear and easy to understand</li> <li>• Where relevant, Potential Supplier has demonstrated limited capability to deliver new and innovative service approaches</li> </ul>
<b>1 Point</b>	<b>Poor:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Potential Supplier has provided a response that fails to address most parts of the requirement</li> <li>• Potential Supplier has provided little or no evidence to support most elements of their response</li> <li>• The evidence supplied is very weak and has very limited relevance to the requirement</li> <li>• Potential Supplier's response is not always clear and easy to understand</li> <li>• Where relevant, Potential Supplier has demonstrated little or no capability to deliver new and innovative service approaches</li> </ul>

5.4 Following evaluation of written submissions, we reserve the right to request demonstration(s) of your proposed solution to ensure it meets our requirements. After demonstration, your submission may be re-scored taking the findings of the demonstration into account.



## 6 PROCUREMENT TIMETABLE

6.1 The procurement timetable is as follows:

Ref.	Description	Date
1	Invitation to Tender published	8 January 2024
2	Deadline for Potential Suppliers to submit clarification questions to <a href="mailto:procurement@nationalarchives.gov.uk">procurement@nationalarchives.gov.uk</a>	5pm 19 January 2024
3	Deadline for Potential Suppliers to submit Tender Responses to <a href="mailto:procurement@nationalarchives.gov.uk">procurement@nationalarchives.gov.uk</a>	5pm 9 February 2024
4	Timebox for evaluation of Tender Responses, including possible product demonstrations	12 February 2024 to 1 March 2024
5	Award decision (after which a 10 day mandatory standstill period will apply)	By 8 March 2024

\* Any clarification question received that TNA deems to be relevant to more than one Potential Supplier may be shared with all Potential Suppliers.

## **7 CONTRACT TERMS**

- 7.1 The contract will be awarded subject to our standard terms and conditions, which can be found [here](#).
- 7.2 TNA reserves the right not to award and to complete its objectives through other means.

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