

Knowledge Transfer Network

Benchmarking KTN to Innovation Networks in other nations

Invitation to Quote Statement of Works KTN-ITQ6885

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1. Background

KTN is the leading, industry-facing knowledge transfer networking organisation in the UK - we describe ourselves as the UK's Innovation Network. What distinguishes KTN from many other organisations that have a role in knowledge transfer networking is that we have in-depth knowledge of practically all sectors of industry and cover all technologies across the whole of the UK. This gives KTN a unique ability to convene and connect across sectoral boundaries and deliver the right connections in order to enable effective business innovation and deliver economic growth.

We have evolved from a set of individual sector-thematic organisations to an overarching innovation network with, we believe, a unique breadth of reach coupled with the depth of knowledge to provide expert insights and advice.

KTN is a not-for-profit Company Limited by Guarantee that is largely publicly funded through grants from Innovate UK (the UK's Innovation Agency that is in turn funded by the Department of Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy). This makes KTN unusual in having a high degree of impartiality – separate from the research base, research funders or industry bodies. We do not exist to commercialise the outcomes from Government funding of research, but to understand needs and capabilities in business and the research base and connect the two. We facilitate business-to-research and business-to-business collaborations and, where necessary, help these new partners access funding and finance. We help to identify market opportunities for new technologies and solutions to industrial and societal problems with the aim of generating economic growth through innovation.

Although in many cases innovation networks might be working closely with innovation agencies, the former do not provide or distribute funding. Rather, they act as a catalyst that speeds up innovation.

KTN has the ambition to be the best in the world at what we do, but we lack sufficient information on organisations in other countries we should use as our comparators. Or indeed if there are direct equivalents in other countries to the way we are structured or operate. Which organisations share a similar remit of economic growth through innovation networking, how are they structured, how are they funded and how do they operate? What lessons of best practice might we learn from them?

In Scope:

- Identifying other publicly funded innovation networks in relevant competitor innovative nations (mainly OECD countries);
- Cataloguing their remit (geographic, technical and operational), objectives, legal status/hosting, funding and evaluation metrics;
- Understanding how they differ depending on the political and economic environments in which they operate in and what makes them successful in that context;
- Identifying examples of best practice;
- Proposing ways in which KTN might use them as benchmarks for performance;

- Desk research

Out of scope:

- Identifying and studying innovation agencies (e.g. Innovate UK and its equivalent in other countries unless they host the innovation networking activity) or for-profit innovation brokerage businesses or platforms
- Travelling to conduct research in the countries of the identified innovation networks

2. Services Required

The purpose of this request for quotation is to:

- I. Invite suppliers to identify innovation networks in the suggested countries, listed below
- II. Invite suppliers to describe their approach cataloguing and analysing the identified innovation networks
- III. Invite suppliers to describe their approach identifying examples of best practice and proposing suitable benchmarks for KTN
- IV. Invite suppliers to provide a quote for the services described in I, II and III.

We would like the successful applicant to identify the following:

1. How is the innovation network structured? Does it operate in one sector or does it aim to make cross-sectoral connections?
2. How does the network operate geographically – on a local, national or supranational level?
3. How is the network funded? Does it sit within some sort of government mechanism or is it (partially) funded by business? Is it part of an organisation with a wider remit? Would it be seen as impartial?
4. What is the purpose of the innovation network? How is success measured by its funders? (e.g. is it number of connections made, GDP growth, patents filed, etc.?)
5. How does the network operate? Is it an R&D facing organisation, seeking to recognise technologies to be pushed to market, or is it business facing and aiming to identify gaps in the market that could be bridged by innovative R&D solutions? In other words, is the network's principle of operation defined, in simplistic terms, by technology push, business pull or both?
6. Does the network demonstrate best practice in the way that it operates, what are these examples and why are they deemed best practice?

7. How would KTN utilise information from other networks in benchmarking its own activities?

The above questions suggest several dimensions for benchmarking which could be presented in a visually engaging way as part of the final output. This is by no means exhaustive list and other ideas are welcome.

An initial suggested list of key countries should probably include the following:

- Canada
- France
- Germany
- Israel
- Japan
- Netherlands
- Singapore
- South Korea
- Sweden
- USA

We are open to suggestions of a different set of countries providing they are explained. Similarly, a two-stage process, with examination of a long list and more detailed study of a short list of countries is an option.

3. Deliverables Required

The following deliverables are required in the event that KTN decides to proceed to commissioning this study:

1. A report of comparative analysis of national innovation networking structures and where does KTN sit among those.
2. A visualisation of the dimensions of an innovation networking and where the analysed entities sit.
3. Identified examples of best-practice from which KTN might learn.
4. A report on possible means for benchmarking KTN performance against innovation networks in other nations.

4. Term and Expiry Date

All work related to this Statement of Works is expected to be completed, including submission of a final report, by Tuesday 3 April 2018. However, the work needs to be invoiced no later than Monday 26 March.

The deadline for submission of the Quote is 23 February 2018 with a contract expected to be placed by 28 February. We reserve the right to hold a telephone interview with suppliers prior to placing the contract.

5. Submission

In response to this Statement of Works please provide the following information:

Innovation network benchmarking:

- A description of how you would meet the deliverables
- Evidence of past or current similar work

Staff resources:

- Staff resources and bios (relevant experience) of the individuals who will undertake the work
- What commitment you expect from our own staff to support any co-development

Legal information:

- The legal entity that will provide the services and your standard T&Cs

Schedule of costs:

- Cost breakdown for the deliverables detailed above

Work Plan:

- Your proposed structure with durations

Additional Information:

- Any additional services you could provide to enhance the project

6. Principal Contact for the Invitation to Quote

Please direct any questions or communications on this Invitation to Quote to:

Lyuba.dimitrova@ktn-uk.org

7. Terms and Conditions

This Invitation to Quote is subject to “KTN’s Terms and Conditions of Contractor Engagement – Company Edition”, which are provided separately.

Please note that KTN reserves the right to not select any supplier if we feel none meet our requirements and budget.

