Invitation to Quote

Invitation to Quote (ITQ) on behalf of UK Research and Innovation

Subject: Scoping the skills needs in the social sciences to support data-driven research

Sourcing Reference Number: CR20042

Version 3.0

UKSBS
Shared Business Services

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Version 3.0

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

UK Research and Innovation

Operating across the whole of the UK and with a combined budget of more than £6 billion, UK Research and Innovation represents the largest reform of the research and innovation funding landscape in the last 50 years.

As an independent non-departmental public body UK Research and Innovation brings together the seven Research Councils (AHRC, BBSRC, EPSRC, ESRC, MRC, NERC, STFC) plus Innovate UK and a new organisation, Research England.

UK Research and Innovation ensures the UK maintains its world-leading position in research and innovation. This is done by creating the best environment for research and innovation to flourish.

For more information, please visit: www.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	UK Research and Innovation, Polaris House, North Star Avenue, Swindon, England, SN2 1FL
3.2.	Buyer name	Alexandra Richards
3.3.	Buyer contact details	Research@uksbs.co.uk
3.4.	Maximum value of the Opportunity	Maximum £100,000.00 Excluding VAT
3.5.	Process for the submission of clarifications and Bids	**All correspondence shall be submitted within the Messaging Centre of the e-sourcing. Guidance Notes to support the use of Delta eSourcing is available here.** **Please note submission of a Bid to any email address including the Buyer will result in the Bid not being considered.**

Section 3 - Timescales		
3.6.	Date of Issue of Contract Advert on Contracts Finder	Monday, 15th June 2020 Contracts Finder
3.7.	Latest date / time ITQ clarification questions shall be received through Delta eSourcing messaging system	Monday, 22nd June 2020 11:00
3.8.	Latest date / time ITQ clarification answers should be sent to all Bidders by the Buyer through Delta eSourcing Portal	Wednesday, 24th June 2020
3.9.	Latest date and time ITQ Bid shall be submitted through Delta eSourcing	Friday, 10th July 2020 11:00
3.10.	Date/time Bidders should be available for clarifications if required	Monday, 27th July 2020
3.11.	Anticipated notification date of successful and unsuccessful Bids	Friday, 21st August 2020
3.12.	Anticipated Contract Award date	Friday, 21st August 2020
3.13.	Anticipated Contract Start date	Tuesday, 1st September 2020
3.14.	Anticipated Contract End date	Friday, 28th May 2021
3.15.	Bid Validity Period	60 Days

Section 4 – Specification

Introduction

In our [Delivery Plan](#) we set out our ambition to extend the investment we make to develop the skills and knowledge needed for social scientists to undertake high-quality, impactful data-driven research. We want to ensure social scientists have the skills and capacity to fully exploit the increasing volume of large and complex data available for research purposes and maximise the value of our investment in data and infrastructure. While our long term comprehensive spending review settlement is not yet known (and therefore the scale of any new investment) it is vital that any additional investment is informed by an up to date and holistic understanding of current and future skills needs, the extent to which they are being met by current investment (by ESRC/UKRI and other funders) and where there are gaps.

As a first step we would like to appoint a team to lead a piece of work to:

i.   scope the specific capacity building needs in the social sciences to support data-driven research; and
ii. identify where additional investment is needed.

Findings and recommendations will be presented to ESRC in a report. The work will need to **reflect the wider data analytics landscape** as well as **take a whole career perspective**, reflecting on the skills requirements and opportunities to build capacity at different stages of the research career i.e. PhD, early, mid and senior. It should **consider the skills required to exploit a range of types of data** and must consider the **opportunities for both qualitative and quantitative research**.

The outcomes of this scoping work, and in particular the recommended actions, will inform the development of a coherent capacity building strategy to support and facilitate data-driven social science research. This scoping work will need to be completed by the end of January 2021. A budget of £100k maximum (excluding VAT) is available.

The remainder of this document summarises our current investment in the relevant skills areas, evidence of areas of ongoing need and more detailed expectations of the team we are seeking to appoint.

<u>Defining what we mean: building capability to undertake data-driven research in the social sciences</u>

Data-driven research is not a discipline or subject area, and it might be found in any research field. It describes activities in which the creation, analysis and representation of data are a central and essential part of a research process, and in

which one or more of those actions forms part of the creative step that distinguishes research from straightforward measurement and reporting.

Activities which involve the gathering or collation of data where the choice of approach or method is ambiguous; inference or prediction based on established statistical approaches; and/or considerations of experimental design which require technical expertise to resolve are data-driven research. Any activity which involves the development of new ways of doing any of these is also data-driven research. Activities which aim to provide or acquire the skills and understanding needed to carry out data-driven research are also data-driven research. Activities which do not require this understanding are not data-driven research – even if they use data in large volumes (even 'big data'.) Activities which create equipment or devices that generate data are also out of scope for this work.

In this context, building capability to undertake data-driven research encapsulates the need to not just gain the technical skills to interrogate the data but to have the relevant conceptual and methodological skills and understanding to ensure high quality, robust and reproducible research and good practice in data management. It is expected that there will be a set of common data skills widely needed at a basic level across the social science community as well as more data specific or advanced level skills. We recognise there will be some variability by discipline and data type.

When contextualising their report, successful bidders will need to identify how common terms such as data analytics and social data science have been included in their analysis.

1. Background

This section focuses on ESRC investment and engagement. There has also been considerable investment by UKRI more widely and others to build capability in data-driven research and it will be important for the scoping work to consider the full breadth of this activity and the extent to which it is addressing (or could address) the skills needs in the social sciences.

In 2014, ESRC commissioned its Strategic Advisors for Research Resources to undertake a piece of work to look at the skills and capacity we needed to develop within the social science research community to enable us to exploit Big Data and undertake research at the interface between the social and biological sciences. The information contributed to the evidence base that informed the areas in which steered studentships would be allocated within our Doctoral Training Partnerships (DTPs) (Data Skills and Advanced Quantitative Methods) and the creation of two thematically focussed Centres for Doctoral Training (CDTs), one focussed on new

and emerging forms of data (the [Data Analytics and Society CDT](#)) and a second focussed on biosocial research ([Soc-B](#)) which draws on longitudinal data.

Additionally, ESRC has made strategic investments to build data skills capability. This includes:

- Q-STEP – an initiative co-funded with Nuffield (and HEFCE until 2019) to generate a step change in the quantitative skills in the social sciences. This initiative has been extended until 2021.
- ESRC/Turing joint fellowship scheme – a core aim of the scheme is to help build new interdisciplinary research capacity in data science and relevant social science. The Fellowships included support for post-doctoral researchers and PhD students.
- NCRM – ESRC established the National Centre for Research Methods (NCRM) in 2004 to address long-recognised problems of methodological under-capacity in the UK social science research community. The centre has recently been commissioned for a further five years with a focussed training remit and will be responsible for the co-ordination of methods training funded by ESRC across its portfolio, acting as the first point of contact for social scientists seeking further information and training on research methods. Through the use of an online portal, the centre will be a 'one stop shop', providing access to high-quality resources and training. NCRM will also ensure a range of training provision and events is put in place, delivered both virtually and face-to-face, and informed by an analysis of the training landscape. Whilst a general resource, training offered by NCRM includes training in a number of competencies that fall under the broad heading of data skills.

ESRC has also successfully bid for National Productivity Investment Fund (NPIF) funding to support additional studentships in the areas of AQM and data skills (38 in 17/18 and 24 in 18/19). Funding was also provided to support the wider doctoral community and the Advanced Quantitative Methods Network (AQMeN) was appointed to map current training provision in the social sciences in the areas of advanced quantitative methods (AQM) and data skills. The team also piloted new training, designed with input from industry, in three areas where a gap in provision had been identified.

Investment to build data skills capacity has also been made as part of our wider Data and Infrastructure Investments. For example, our Business and Local Government Data Centres have developed and delivered a number of knowledge exchange, capacity building and training programmes such as:

- Masters Research Dissertation Programme: an annual national programme of industry master's Dissertation projects (Consumer Data Research Centre)
- MSc Consumer Analytics and Marketing Strategy programme (Consumer Data Research Centre)
- ESRC Social Analytics Network (SASNet) - a programme of training and skills development activities (Business and Local Government Centre and the Urban Big Data Centre)
- Face-to-face training. Short introductory courses include: R; Stata; social network analytics; QGIS; Geodemographic Segmentation; ArcGIS; Hadoop for Transport Informatics; training on connected vehicles; as well as a suite of advanced-level courses in analytics, visualisation and computational modelling.

It is expected that other relevant work is likely to have been undertaken within our research centres and large grants. However, this information is not captured systematically.

Ongoing need

The Social Media for the Social Sciences study commissioned by ESRC in 2016 (and undertaken by Professor Susan Halford) identified a skills gap in both the accessing of and use of social media data for social science research. The report recommended the development of training in the use of these resources across the talent pipeline.

In 2017 we asked for evidence on where we need to build knowledge and skills to improve the UK's social science capability and capacity. This exercise identified skills needs in a number of areas relating to new and emerging forms of data including in the areas of technologies; data; and computational science. Further information can be found in the summary report [here](#).

The Longitudinal Studies Review conducted in 2017 recognised the value of high-quality data skills in the use of longitudinal studies and noted the importance of the availability of training in broader data skills. Subsequent work to map the skills needs to maximize the use of our longitudinal studies has highlighted a need for new training on data handling and data manipulation, including the creation of 'messy' datasets based on existing data that can be used for training.

A series of 'think pieces' were commissioned in 2018 to inform the development of our Delivery Plan priorities. In his report on 'Future data and Analytics for Evidence-based Policy', Professor De Roure noted that new forms of data and analytics needed to become a basic part of social science training provision. This need to include not just computational skills but also data appraisal, data management; and critical interpretation of analytical outcomes. He recommended that defining and delivering skills provision in emerging data, analytics, computational thinking and reproducible research (where relevant). Professor Nigel Shadbolt, author of the 'Towards a sustainable and equitable research data infrastructure', made a number of recommendations relating to capacity building: an extension of CDT schemes supported by ESRC to provide more focused training in Data Science as well as greater coordination with existing cross Council CDTs; the establishment of short term 'Mastering Data' Fellowships for larger cohorts of students to benefit from elements of either existing provision (CDT training modules) or new provision in core data science skills; and an aspiration by ESRC to secure between 10 and 20 Future Leader Fellowships in the area of Social Data Science.

Lastly, it was noted at an Alan Turing Institute/ESRC Workshop: Social Data Science for Evidence Based Policy that there was an urgent need to define and deliver skills provision in emerging data, analytics, computational thinking and reproducible research, along with the fostering of inter-disciplinary collaboration. Initiatives such as those being undertaken by the Data Lab and the National Innovation Centre for Data provide one possible model, while also enabling the building of partnerships with – and transfer of skills to – the policy and industry sectors.

2. Aims and Objectives of the Project

Our existing evidence base demonstrates that further investment is needed to build capability to undertake data-driven research in the social sciences. However, the recommendations made to us are generally at a high level and focus on separate areas of activity or data. Further detail is needed for us to build a more holistic view from which we can make targeted, evidence-based interventions in the short to medium term (approx... 3-5 years).

We would like to appoint a team to:

- provide an up-to-date and holistic scoping of the skills needed to undertake data-driven research in the social sciences;

- identify where additional investment is needed this could be through specific conventional training or career pathway interventions (e.g. a sabbatical or fellowship opportunities); and
- how ESRC can add value in this area.

The work will need to take a whole career perspective reflecting on the skills requirements and opportunities to build capacity at different stages of the research career i.e. PhD, early, mid and senior.

It must also consider:

- The skills and knowledge required to exploit a range of different types of data including cohort/survey, biosocial, administrative and new and emerging forms of data.
- The needs of both qualitative and quantitative researchers
- The breadth of social science disciplines
- The implications for training in other areas e.g. research design skills.

Not all social scientists will need to be trained in all of the skills areas identified. We need to understand what the core skills are that all social scientists should have and what the advanced skills are that a smaller group undertaking more specialist research will need.

The report, including your analysis, will need to be positioned within the wider data skills landscape, identifying opportunities for social scientists offered by funders/organisations and examining the extent to which the social science research community engage with this provision; and whether it meets the community's needs.

While drawing on the team's knowledge and existing relevant work, it is envisaged that a core component of the project will be capturing input from relevant academic and non-academic experts on their understanding of current and future skills and career pathway needs as well as current investment by ESRC and others.

Emerging findings relevant to doctoral training will directly inform our [Review of the PhD in the social sciences](#) and the development of our Postgraduate Training Strategy post 2022, including the updating of our Postgraduate Training and Development Guidelines which set out our training requirements for all students.

There may also be learning from our review of the PhD in the social sciences that will be relevant to this scoping activity. It is therefore important that the appointed team actively engages with the team undertaking an evidence review for us as part of our [review of the PhD in the social sciences](#).

This is a broad project and bidders need to articulate how they will distil these aims and objectives into a feasible workplan. Any proposed groupings or prioritisation will need to be fully justified.

The outputs of this work will be an important first step in the development of a coherent capacity building strategy to build capability in the social sciences to undertake data-driven research. We recognise that further work may be necessary to unpack some of its conclusions and recommendations. The specific activity required will be dependent on the recommendations made and their connectivity to other existing pieces of work, particularly those noted above.

Whilst the report will identify specific interventions and recommend how they might be realised, work to implement the recommendations of the report is not included in the scope of this tender. However, the contract may be extended should ESRC need further advice from the team on how their recommendations might be put into practice.

3. Proposed Approach

It is proposed that the work the team undertakes is organised into three stages so that evidence from this project is available at key decision points for our review of the PhD in the social sciences and the development of our Postgraduate Training Strategy post 2022:

i.   Stage 1: Needs analysis – what are the core skills are needed by social scientists and what advanced training is needed and at what scale? This should draw on existing relevant work and include primary engagement with experts in the field.
ii. Stage 2: Doctoral interventions – what interventions are needed at a doctoral level. What is the scale of change needed in the curriculum? More specifically, what is the gap between our current postgraduate research and development guidelines and the core training identified as being needed?
iii. Stage 3: Rest of career interventions – what initiatives are required beyond doctoral training. How can researchers effectively upskill later on in their careers? What balance is needed between conventional training and career pathway interventions?

The outcomes of stages 1 and 2 will need to be reported in an interim report to be submitted to ESRC in early March 2021.

To meet our requirements, the team will be expected to:

- Undertake desk-based analysis of what the skills needs are; existing relevant ESRC initiatives and interventions both within the social sciences and beyond. These initiatives may be supported by ESRC, by other parts of UKRI and/or by other funder/organisations. It will also be important to consider any relevant evaluation work.
- Identify and consult with key stakeholder groups. This will include academic experts from within and beyond the social sciences; non-academic organisations with an interest in the area; current providers of relevant training/infrastructure investments; and potential users of new training/initiatives.
- Identify and consult with a wider range of other stakeholders involved in the funding and delivery of initiatives to build capability in data-driven research.
- Consult with the team appointed to complete an evidence review as part of our review of the PhD in the social sciences to ensure a two-way flow of information between the two reviews.
- Get feedback from key stakeholders on initial findings and explore the feasibility of emerging recommendations.

Bidders are invited to set out their approach to undertake this scoping work. In doing so, bidders must articulate how the proposed methodology will provide the evidence needed to deliver a report that meets ESRC's requirements: identifies current skills needs and training currently available in the area; and identifies what additional investment is needed both in the short and medium term.

Bidders should identify key milestones for their proposed project and present them in the form of a milestone plan in their tender.

All costs must be fully justified and commensurate with the proposed activities identified in bids.

Stakeholder engagement

The appointed team will be expected to engage with experts representing the breadth of relevant areas in the social sciences as well as from other research council domains, particularly individuals working at the interface with the social

sciences (researchers who sit outside of the social sciences but collaborate with social scientists on research projects). We encourage bidders to consider the full breadth of potential interdisciplinary collaborators for social scientists.

It will be important that academics with expertise in large, complex and messy data sources are represented and effort must be made to ensure that key groups outside the social sciences are involved such as the Alan Turing Institute and the Software Sustainability Institute. It is recognised that potential contributors may come from a range of career stages and engaging the new generation of researchers will be valuable. It is key that contributors are able to speak of skills and career pathway needs at different career stages and the extent of current provision.

We are interested in the views of non-academic stakeholders with an interest in this area. For example, they may be as training providers, employers, commissioners of research and/or collaborators on data-driven research.

We're expecting a wide range of stakeholders to be consulted. This tender indicates some of the stakeholder groups that we think would be relevant for this piece of work. This is not exhaustive, and bidders will be asked to outline who they intend to involve, including those beyond ESRC's regular networks, as part of their bid. We would be pleased to broker introductions where we have an existing relationship with a stakeholder (e.g. existing ESRC investments) and will discuss how to facilitate that contact with the appointed supplier

Consideration should be given to different forms of stakeholder engagement such as stakeholder workshops, focus groups, interviews etc. Bidders should set out and cost their preferred stakeholder approach. If the Government restrictions in place at the time of bidding do not allow for the proposed activities to take place, bidders should set out what contingency plans will be implemented if restrictions are not lifted in time to undertake the proposed work. This should be included when bidders are describing their approach to risk management.

The team appointed will be expected to develop specific engagement activities in consultation with the ESRC to maximise their strategic relevance and enable access by the individual/team to relevant ESRC networks and partnerships.

Risk management

We recognise that it is unknown when current government restrictions in place due to coronavirus will end. Bidders should outline how they will manage this risk, providing assurance that any mitigations can be implemented within the overall funding envelope. More generally, bids should also provide an analysis of all the risks associated with this work.

Oversight of the project

The ESRC's Expert Advisory Group for Data Infrastructure and Methods will oversee this scoping project and the appointed team will be invited to present their findings to the Group.

4. Deliverables

Outputs

Interim report

It is important that emerging outcomes from this project relating to doctoral training feed into our review of the PhD in the social sciences in a timely way. The supplier will need to submit an interim report covering emerging findings and recommendations at a doctoral level in early March 2021. The interim report will shared with the ESRC PhD Review team as well as the steering group overseeing that project.

Final report

The primary output will be a fully evidenced report which:

- identifies skills needed to build capability in data-driven research differentiated by:

- basic and advanced level;
- common skills and data-type specific
- career stages in the life course
- discipline
- identifies gaps in current provision and makes recommendations for how these can be addressed, either by building on current provision or the introduction of new initiatives
- provides prioritised recommendations on how this work is progressed including where more detailed advice is needed on understanding the skills and career pathway needs and opportunities in specific areas
- includes a diagram mapping the skills and career pathway needs and opportunities against career stages
- details the approach used by the team and who was asked to contribute to the study.

The report format will be agreed with the individual/team once they have been appointed but it will be expected to include a publishable executive summary.

Timetable

Key dates are as follows:

- Specification advertised – 15th June 2020
- Deadline for bids – 10th July 2020
- Clarification requests sent to bidders – 27th July 2020
- Responses to clarification questions – w/c 27th July 2020
- Preferred bidder identified – w/c 17th August 2020
- Precontract inception meeting – w/c 24th August
- Team appointed/work starts – 1st September 2020
- Interim report due – 5th March 2021
- Draft final report due – 26th April 2021
- Final report due – 24th May 2021
- Present findings to the ESRC Expert Advisory Group – Spring/Summer 2021

Requirements of the team

Bidders must detail how they have the necessary expertise and experience to undertake this project, explicitly linking how the skills of the project team will enable the successful implementation of their proposed approach. Collaborative bids provide an opportunity for bidders to incorporate the breadth of expertise needed for

this project and are encouraged. Members of the team can come from multiple sectors and can be from different universities/organisations. Please note however that we do expect one or more academic researchers to be part of any core team submitting a bid.

Collectively the team must command a strong commitment to and understanding of building capability in data-driven research across the social sciences. This is a strategically important project and it is essential the team can provide intellectual leadership. Bidders must also demonstrate a clear appreciation of the relevant landscape; current challenges; and a strong commitment towards innovative, interdisciplinary working. Collectively, the appointed team must demonstrate they have the competencies required to effectively deliver the project.

Enough time will need to be committed by individuals in the team to deliver the programme of work proposed. Roles, responsibilities and time commitments of team members need to be set out clearly in bids.

Collaboration with ESRC

Close working between the ESRC Skills and Methods and the appointed team will be vital throughout the work. Progress reviews every 2 weeks will take place via email, phone or video conferencing.

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.

The evaluation and if required team may comprise staff from UK SBS and the Contracting Authority and any specific external stakeholders the Contracting Authority deems required. After evaluation and if required moderation 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÷3 = 5.33)

Pass / Fail criteria

Questionnaire	Q No.	Question subject
Commercial	SEL1.2	Employment breaches/ Equality
Commercial	SEL1.3	Compliance to Section 54 of the Modern Slavery Act
Commercial	SEL2.10	Cyber Essentials
Commercial	SEL2.12	General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) Act and the Data Protection Act 2018
Commercial	FOI1.1	Freedom of Information
Commercial	AW1.1	Form of Bid
Commercial	AW1.3	Certificate of Bona Fide Bid
Commercial	AW3.1	Validation check
Commercial	AW4.1	Compliance to the Contract Terms
Commercial	AW4.2	Changes to the Contract Terms
Price	AW5.1	Maximum Budget
Price	AW5.4	E Invoicing
Price	AW5.5	Implementation of E-Invoicing
Quality	AW6.1	Compliance to the Specification
Quality	AW6.2	Variable Bids
-	-	Invitation to Quote – received on time within e-sourcing tool
		In the event of a Bidder failing to meet the requirements of a Mandatory pass / fail criteria, the Contracting Authority reserves the right to disqualify the Bidder and not consider evaluation of any of the Award stage scoring methodology or Mandatory pass / fail criteria.

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	10%
Quality	PROJ1.1	Approach/ Methodology	25%
Quality	PROJ1.2	Staff to Deliver	25%
Quality	PROJ1.3	Understanding the Environment	20%
Quality	PROJ1.4	Project Plan, Timescales and Risk	20%

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:
Score = {weighting percentage} x {bidder's score} = 20% x 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 there may be multiple evaluators. If so, their individual scores will be averaged (mean) to determine your final score as follows:

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) ÷ 4 = 50

Your final score will be calculated as follows (60+40+80+60) ÷ 4 = 60

Quality questions will be marked based on the above mechanism. Please be aware that there may be multiple evaluators. If so, their individual scores will be reviewed in an evaluator meeting, once the individual evaluations are complete and a consensus score will be agreed to determine your final score.

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 x 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.uksbs.co.uk/services/procure/Pages/supplier.aspx

PLEASE NOTE THE QUESTIONS ARE NOT NUMBERED SEQUENTIALLY

Section 7 – General Information

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 Delta eSourcing 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.

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 Delta eSourcing, Telephone 0845 270 7050

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 the Delta eSourcing Portal.

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 Delta eSourcing Portal.

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 the Delta eSourcing Portal.

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 2nd 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