

SUPPORT FOR FAMILIES WITH DISABLED CHILDREN FUND
CAPABILITY ASSESSMENT

Department/Organisation:	Department for Education (DfE)
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Agreement ref:	RM6172 Grant Administration Services DPS
Date issued:	20 October 2022.
Response deadline:	28 October 2022

Summary

a) The project objectives

The appointment of a contractor through competition to administer the Support for Families with Disabled Children (SFDC) Grant Scheme. This grant programme provides funding to families with disabled or seriously ill children dealing with financial hardship, poverty and deprivation. The funding will typically be delivered in non-cash form, either through vouchers for goods or provision of goods directly. The project is targeted to provide at least 60,000 families with support per annum.

The Contractor will be responsible for managing the administration of the SFDC fund on behalf of the Department for Education across all of England. The components of the service requirement include, but are not limited to:

- **Grant Administration:** administration of the fund, including determining who is eligible for funding, processing applications and undertaking assessments of first-time applicants.
- **Electronic Platform:** host and manage an electronic application portal to process grant applications.
- **Procurement of Goods and Services to be awarded via the Scheme:** purchasing and delivery of low value grant items and activities (c. £400-£500 per grant) to a large number (minimum 60,000) of low-income families of CYP who are disabled or seriously ill to meet key needs on top of statutory entitlements.
- **Advisory Services:** signposting to families of CYP who are disabled or seriously ill, areas of additional support required to meet their needs.
- **Research, Analysis and Reporting:** monitoring, research and evaluation on the needs and experiences of families of CYP who are disabled or seriously ill.
- **Fraud:** implement and maintain a robust fraud identification and prevention process to prevent the award of funds to fraudulent applicants.
- **Safeguarding:** implement appropriate safeguarding measures to ensure the welfare of all CYP and families that apply to the fund.

b) Mandatory constraints/ services required

Core components of the services requirements are outlined above. Further details are provided in the Specification.

c) Constraints that may preclude suppliers from accepting this specification

The attention of bidders is drawn to the Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations 2006 (TUPE). Whilst it is the responsibility of the bidder to consider whether TUPE applies in the circumstances of this contract, and to tender accordingly, it is the view of the Department that TUPE may apply as a consequence of any change in the provider of the services under this contract. However, the Department is not liable for this view and bidders should form their own view, taking specialist advice if necessary.

Based on information provided by the incumbent provider of services, the Department understands that there are currently 78 employees based in York who would potentially be within the scope of TUPE, although the Department makes no representations or warranties as to the accuracy of this information. Anonymised information on these employees will be made available during the ITT stage subject to the completion of a non-disclosure agreement.

Maintaining continuity of service for grant recipient families is of the utmost importance to DfE. For this reason, if TUPE does apply, any new provider must be able to transfer, and continue to employ, all staff that are within the scope of TUPE as outlined above.

d) Budget and contract duration (including any extension options)

The Department has allocated £27.323m of funding for the first year of the fund, inclusive of delivery costs. It is the Department's intention to procure a service for three years with appropriate annual break clauses to allow for changes in Ministerial priorities, policy direction or budget allocations.

Stage 2 of the process will provide further information on budget and contract duration.

e) Timescales for tender (stages/ award)

Please see below. The authority reserves the right to amend the timeline at any time.

Activity	Dates
Capability Assessment issued (pre-ITT)	20/10/22
Publish ITT	28/02/23
Competition (4 weeks)	28/02/23 – 28/03/23
Evaluation & Award Process	28/03/23 – 26/04/23
Issue Intent to Award	26/04/23
Contract Issued	10/05/23
Transition & Implementation (5 months)	10/05/23-30/09/23
Service Commencement	01/10/23

Call for competition process

Stage 1 – Capability Assessment to identify suppliers that can meet the core requirements. Suppliers must be able to answer yes to all the capability assessment questions to become shortlisted.

Stage 2 – Final specification and ITT documents issued as part of a call for competition. Responses will be evaluated against the published evaluation criteria and the successful bidder will be notified. All unsuccessful bidders will also receive feedback as per the agreement guidance.

Capability questions

Please confirm you have the capability to provide the following services by responding Yes or No to the questions listed below. Only those bidders answering yes to questions 1 to 12 will progress to Stage 2. All questions must be answered.

Please note: Where additional information has been requested you must provide further details however your answer will not be evaluated, and further information will be requested during stage 2 of the call for competition process.

Prerequisites

1. Do you have a proven track record of delivering a high-volume grant administration service (including forecasting and demand management), comparable to that set out in the Specification, with applications for consideration and assessment in excess of 100,000 per annum?

YES	NO

Please provide the details (including the value and volumes) of the programme fund:

Implementation

2. Can you deliver all Transition and Implementation activities (including a TUPE Transfer) within the timeline given at point (e) above?

YES	NO

3. Please confirm that you would be able to onboard all existing staff who may be in scope for a TUPE transfer and continue to employ them.

YES	NO

Grant Distribution

4. The Support for Families with Disabled Children fund offers non-cash support to individual recipients, through the provision of goods and services. Do you have previous experience of delivering a service or programme of this type?

YES	NO

Please provide the details of the service or programme:

5. The grant funding covers provision of the below (non-exhaustive) categories of goods and services which should be procured in compliance with Public Contract Regulations. Do you have the capacity and capability to implement processes to secure the supply and distribution of these goods and services (or vouchers for the goods and services) by the service commencement date of 1st October 2023?

- a) Security and CCTV
- b) Beds and bedding
- c) Garden furniture
- d) Play equipment (including toys and games)
- e) Therapeutic resources
- f) Pushchairs and accessories
- g) White goods
- h) Clothing
- i) Entertainment
- j) Educational resources
- k) Sports equipment and bicycles
- l) Bereavement services
- m) Mobile phones, tablets, laptops or other electronic devices for communication or entertainment
- n) Soft furnishings
- o) Holidays/Family breaks

YES	NO

Reporting Requirements

6. Do you have the capability to carry out analysis and reporting on data associated with the grant scheme?

YES	NO

Application Process

7. Do you have the capability to accept postal applications and manage in excess of 120,000 phone enquiries, applications or requests for advice and signposting per annum?

YES	NO

8. Do you have the capability to comprehensively assess all applications against the risk of fraud?

YES	NO

9. The Support for Families with Disabled Children fund requires direct contact with vulnerable families. Please confirm you have the capability to accurately identify and report any safeguarding concerns to the appropriate authorities.

YES	NO

10. The Support for Families with Disabled Children fund is promoted by Children's Services Social Workers, Health Visitors and other support services for target families. Do you have experience of engaging with external agencies regarding the promotion and distribution of funding?

YES	NO

Technology

11. The successful bidder will be asked to satisfactorily complete the Department's Supplier Assurance Questionnaire (included as Appendix 1) prior to contract award. Please confirm you have read the document and have the necessary capability to successfully complete this prior to contract award stage.

YES	NO

12. Do you have experience of building (or buying), hosting and managing an IT system and web-based portal capable of processing in excess of 100,000 applications per annum, which conforms with the GDS Technology Code of Practice.?

YES	NO

Please note that any **Nil or late responses to this invitation** will be treated as confirmation of your intention NOT to participate in this competition and you will not be invited to participate in Stage 2.

Please note that any **"NO" responses to questions 1-12 above** will be treated as confirmation of your intention NOT to participate in this competition and you will not be invited to participate in Stage 2.

All responses to Stage 1 should be submitted via the DfE Jaggaer system by no later than **5pm on 28th October 2022**.

Should you have any queries regarding the Capability Assessment please send them via the Jaggaer portal.