**Futures Procurement Framework Renewal**

**Supplier Q&A – December 2022**

**Q1: Is there a cap on the number of suppliers who can be on the framework?**

A: There is no official cap, but we want this framework to give a manageable number to customers. The ITT pack contains explicit evaluation criteria which applicants will be scored against, and we will set a benchmark overall score for inclusion in the renewed framework. If more than 35 suppliers surpass this score, the evaluation panel will select the top scoring 35 based on proven expertise and capacity to deliver against technical requirements. This quota has been set to ensure manageability and market navigability by prospective customers.

**Q2: Why is the maximum spend on the framework set at £3m? With inflation and desire to be used more? Can you apply for an increase in budget.**

A: If market analysis is done it may be deemed appropriate to request for increased max budget (if it becomes apparent that we will surpass the £3m mark given levels and trajectory of demand).

**Q3: Are there any restrictions on the location of the supplier organisations or can they be internationally based?**

A: provided they meet the criteria for service delivery, suppliers may be based in the UK or internationally; the framework will be bound by the GPA (Government Procurement Agreement). There is nothing to say that they can’t be UK based.

**Q4: Will the framework be let under separate Lots (aligned with service needs) or just one?**

A: We will not split the framework requirements into lots, rather we will evaluate suppliers against a range of skills and capabilities, ensuring we have good coverage of all services and specialisms. See ITT pack for more detail on evaluation criteria.

**Q5: Can you provide a view on the typical type and size of taskings in the past and timelines for delivery ... e.g. are sub £50k usually ~8 week tasks? Is value and duration typically bigger/longer?**

A: Most of the commissions we see are around the 50k mark or less, and engagements last 2-4months. Occasional £100k+ commissions will last longer, for example, the current participatory and design futures exercise commissioned by GO-Science Foresight, which is lasting just less than a year. Often customers will commission incrementally, or just for modular parts of a project.

**Q6: Are consortia bids encouraged?**

A: You are allowed to submit as consortia. Must be a lead supplier named and other members of the consortium must be clearly stated. BEIS/GOS cannot be members of the consortium. More information on this, including confidentiality agreements, will be included in the ITT pack.

**Q7: What is the scale of the tender response i.e., likely word limits. How much info is required?**

A: Templates will be sent out as part of the tender pack. Tends to be about 15-16 pages in total. Split across questions on understanding of requirements, organisational profile, ability to resource projects, day rates etc.

**Q8: Is there a minimum level of security clearance (I.e., BPSS) and /or nationality restrictions?**

A: Useful to know if you do have a clearance but it is not essential. Nationality – will be case by case based on commissioner requirements; certain projects may not be able to be awarded to non-UK entities.

**Q9: How many of the 27 (approximately) won work, through this framework, in the past 3 years?**

A: 30% of suppliers won work via the last framework. A few did not ever bid, whereas several received repeat or follow-on commissions.

**Q10: In terms of evaluation criteria and skills: How will evaluation work when the scope of this framework is beyond traditional futures and foresight? E.g. the data and technology requirement?**

A: See information on evaluation criteria in the ITT pack. Our objective is to select a combination of generalists who can deliver against most of the requirements and some suppliers with deep expertise and capability against one or two requirements.

**Q11: What has informed requirement number 6 (citizen engagement) and number 4 (establishment of internal futures functions)?**

A: Across government the need for more participatory futures, and a greater diversity of perspectives involved in futures work, is being recognised. We’re keen to lead this evolution of futures work in the public sector. On 4 – again driven by demand from departments for guidance and support in building futures literacy and setting up their own systems and functions to be able to do better futures work in-house. This won’t dampen government appetite to commission externally, in fact, it will create more intelligent customers for futures across organisations and drive demand.

**Q12: The range of requirements is wider now - are you looking for suppliers that can deliver on all of them, or a few in depth?**

A: As per Q10, we do need a subset of suppliers to be able to deliver on the data and tech scanning requirements, which are reasonably specific and we expect to see less of an overlap with other specialisms. But for the most part we are looking for futures/foresight specialists in general, able to deliver against a range of requirements.

**Q13: Can you advise which Gov depts have been frequent users of the framework?**

A: A wide spectrum. High levels of interest in the defence community, but users have emerged from a wide range of departments. Most frequent users are: FCDO, IPO, BEIS, DCMS, Cabinet Office, DfE, Northern Ireland Govt, DEFRA.

**Q14: What type of projects have utilised this framework the most, i.e., environmental, financial, technology, NetZero, education?**

A: Again a wide spectrum. Many policy areas, themes and topics covered as shown in the customer list above.

**Q15: What is the likely balance of the 6 types of service? Out of the 27 which service type was used most frequently?**

A: Capability building used most frequently, but again we saw a spread of requests across the six.

**Q16: Of the past work - How many of the tasks went to competition given most are sub £50k and could be direct awarded?**

A: 50% of commissions went out to the full framework, 50% were direct awards.

**Q17: How does this BEIS-run framework relate to the general research and insights framework run by Crown Commercial Services?**

A: CCS run huge frameworks; we investigated the R&I framework as a potential home for futures suppliers, but it is very broad and doesn’t support customers in navigating the futures and foresight landscape in the way the Futures Procurement Framework does. This is a much clearer, tailored and navigable marketplace.

**Q18: Is there any specific expertise you look for in the individuals included in the tender application? For example, things you look for in CVs.**

A: It is useful to know where one or more of your consultants has subject matter expertise (beyond Futures and foresight-related expertise), so we will ask you to disclose this in the tender documents (by providing a selection of relevant, short bios). This will be evaluated in balance with the overall resilience of organisation over the 3-year period, e.g. if leaning heavily on one subject matter expert we want to ensure this doesn’t constitute a single point of failure for projects.

**Q19: If a vendor is able to provide both facilitation of capability building and a tool/platform for a project would this be counted as two separate lots?**

A: See the ITT pack for details evaluation criteria; we are not splitting this tender into lots, but are evaluating with the objective of shortlisting a spread of deep vs broad expertise and capabilities.

**Q20: Are the toolkit and training materials available to all bidders so it can be factored in?**

A: Here are links to GO-S [toolkit](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/futures-toolkit-for-policy-makers-and-analysts) and [trend deck](https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/trend-deck-spring-2021) which are publicly available. Any training we run is generally based on the toolkit.

**Q21: Is there any aim to spread the approved suppliers among different types or sizes of organisations?**

A: Yes, we intend to list a range of expertise and styles of consultancy, from quantitative to qualitative approaches, small and large organisations, different deliverables (workshops, reports, dashboard) etc. More detail can be found in ITT pack.

**Q22: Is the pricing framework going to preference fixed price or T&M?**

A: Application template is based on day rates, so you will be asked to provide information on rate cards and indicative prices for services. When specific projects are commissioned via the new framework, there is the requirement to quote for more tailored deliverables.

**Q23: If it's multi-year, can we bid using day rates with 2023-24, x £, 240-25 £y rate etc?**

A: The current template in the ITT pack only allows for day rates for this year – however, framework suppliers will meet with framework managers and BEIS commercial annually to review day rates against market dynamics. Inflation rates will be considered, using an established and accessible index (like CPI), when adjusting day rate estimates.

**Q24: What weight will the pricing carry in the evaluation criteria?**

A: Cost accounts for 20% of the weighting.

**Q25: If we have not yet won work through the previous versions of the framework should we take that as a sign we're not a good fit?**

A: No, demand for futures is growing and the nature of that demand is changing. In the coming years we hope for less ‘surge’ activity in government (fewer civil servants pulled off their day job to work ‘in crisis mode’) so teams will procure and commission more through the framework. We encourage you to apply!

**Q26: Are Delphi methods still relevant/popular or required?**

A: Yes, the Delphi method has been / is being used in current project work, and features in our Toolkit.

**Q27: Will all 27 existing suppliers be sent the ITT docs as a matter of course or will they need to keep checking Contracts Finder?**

A: Existing suppliers will need to access the Contracts Finder / Find-a-Tender links for the ITT pack and guidance on application. GO-Science will notify existing suppliers of this by email; there will be no targeted sending of the pack.

**Q28. Having worked closely with the UK context before, we believe we can navigate the policy environment well while at the same time providing an enriching Finnish foresight perspective. Are we eligible to participate as a Finland-based organisation? We also have a flexible physical presence in the UK. In addition to Finland, our experts come from multiple nationalities, including the UK.**

A: See response to Q3

**Q. [Our agency has] extensive experience working internationally with different governments and other actors (e.g. UNDP, OECD, Nesta) in foresight. How does the value of international expertise weigh in compared to the experience of working within the UK context?**

A. This will vary commission by commission. Some futures project briefs will focus on issues or systems that are international or global in scale, whilst others may target more local themes, policy challenges and audiences. In many cases, having access to global evidence and datasets is beneficial for understanding the broader operating context, regardless of the policy area. The (new) inclusion of data provision in the services listed is mostly due to increased demand across government for broad and deep insight into global systems such as environment, economics and the science & technology landscape, including international comparators.

**Q. [Our agency has] 50 experts with different emphases on expertise. Some specialise in producing high-quality foresight knowledge, participatory foresight processes and co-creation. In addition, we have experts who develop governments' capacity to use foresight knowledge and embed foresight into government processes. Specifically, can you tell us if any of these will be a particular focus in this round? Relating to this, is there a restriction on the number of experts that can be nominated within an organisation**? **We usually operate in a collaborative manner utilising the expertise and networks of all [our] employees.**

A. See answers to Q15 and Q18. We anticipate a range of commissions over the three year period, some more focussed on discrete project support, some on capability building, and some on scanning and analysis. There is no limit to the number of expert employees you can list, though do please see the RFP Questions document for guidance on the length of your responses/proposals. Please also see the Pricing Schedule template within the ITT pack which requests day rates for grades of employee.