



Department  
for Environment  
Food & Rural Affairs

## Defra Group Commercial 'Geospatial Enabling Programme'

### Request for Information

Planned contract duration:	7 Months
Extension options:	4 x 1 Year Options (for Stage 2)
Number of users:	630 technical primary users and over 1100 secondary users of the data
Options:	<p>During Stage 1 - Alpha/Design stage, there are some key decisions that will be made, based on the user/business requirements and analysis. From those decision various options for Stage 2 - Delivery and Business as Usual Transition are possible. These will be defined as options and current option paths are-</p> <p><b>Technology</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Current Defra infrastructure can fully support</li> <li>• Current Defra infrastructure can be expanded and changed to support</li> <li>• Current Defra infrastructure cannot support, therefore alternative is required</li> </ul> <p><b>Map Date</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Current mapped data can fully support</li> <li>• Current mapped data can be expanded and changed to support</li> <li>• Current mapped data cannot support, therefore alternative is required</li> </ul> <p>Within those, there will be combinations possible, that</p>

	will determine the suggested and approved design.
Route to market:	A Call Off from the Space Enabled and Geospatial Services DPS framework*

\*To apply to the Dynamic Purchasing system, you must first register on the Supplier Registration Service [Here](#). It takes approximately two weeks to join the Space Enabled and Geospatial Services Dynamic Purchasing System if authorised by CCS. Please see more information [Here](#).

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## 1. Purpose of the RFI

This Request for Information (RFI) is to provide potential suppliers the opportunity to inform Defra (the "Contracting Authority") of its service offering as well as identify areas of possible concern with the Contracting Authority's requirements. The RFI is purely for the purposes of pre-procurement market engagement and any results from these responses and follow up meetings may be used to inform our final set of requirements, any procurement strategy and enhance any Bidder Pack that we may be issuing. It should be noted that any output from the RFI responses will not form part of any evaluation.

## General Guidance

This RFI (which shall be deemed to include any materials provided with the RFI) has been prepared by the Contracting Authority in relation to an Early Engagement Notice to conduct pre-procurement engagement activities with the supply market.

- This RFI summarises certain aspects of the procurement but does not purport to:
  - contain complete descriptions of it; nor
  - to be all inclusive or contain all the information that a bidder may require when determining whether to submit a response to the RFI.
- If potential suppliers are unclear as to the instructions for the response, this should be raised with the Contracting Authority as a clarification through email ([izabella.roberts@defra.gov.uk](mailto:izabella.roberts@defra.gov.uk)).
- No representation or warranty, express or implied, is or will be made, and no responsibility or liability is or will be accepted by the Contracting Authority or any of its advisors as to the accuracy, adequacy or completeness of the information within this RFI.
- This RFI is not intended to form the basis of any investment decision or other evaluation by the recipient(s) and does not constitute and should not be considered as a recommendation by any person in connection with the project. Each party to whom this RFI is made available should, at its own cost and expense, make its own independent assessment of the project after making such investigation as it may deem necessary.
- Potential suppliers should note that this RFI in no way commits the Contracting Authority to use an OJEU procedure as a Route to Market (RTM).
- Potential Suppliers should note that this RFI and/or formal commencement of this procurement and/or any further presentations given (including this RFI) in no way commits the Contracting Authority to award any contract relating to the Programme.
- This RFI and any information provided to you is confidential and subject to copyright and may not be published, reproduced, copied, distributed or disclosed to any person without the prior written consent of the Authority.

- The Contracting Authority shall not be liable for any costs or expenses of any Potential Supplier in relation to any matter in connection with this RFI or the Project howsoever incurred, including the evaluation of the service opportunity, the award, or any proposal for the award of the Contract or negotiation of the associated contractual agreements.

Any responses are to help the Contracting Authority gather information about this type of service, which may be available in the marketplace and to help inform our potential requirement/Route to Market.

Please be advised that:

- this opportunity is offered entirely without prejudice,
- it is not a sales opportunity,
- it is for information purposes only to help inform our potential requirement.

## 2. Background

Pre Discovery Jan-Jul 2024 was completed to understand the pain points and issues users across the Defra group have experienced in the delivery of land-based outcomes and the cross organisational support for this important area. This defined the scope of the programme and how this will deliver the vision of the programme to “To unlock the power of the geospatial capability in support of the Defra Outcomes framework and to support digital transformation in the delivery of land-based outcomes”.

**Discovery completed Sep-Dec 2024:** carried out analysis and user research across APHA, Defra, Environment Agency, Forestry Commission, Natural England, Rural Payments Agency found that geospatial data is critical for Defra’s ability to support delivery of the growth mission including the Land Use Framework and to effectively deliver regulation, although is hindered by the following:

- Duplication of activity - such as cleansing of data, analysing same data for similar outcomes & duplicated field visits to the same parcel of land.
- No common land dataset – resulting in:
  - multiple versions of the same area of land across Defra group and estimated to be 14% of rural land not captured in Defra mapping systems. This inhibits effective policy development due to differing views of the geometry and land use.
  - Communication with our customers is repetitive as farmers asked about the same piece of land although already submitted to Defra group.
- Siloed ways of working – there is a lack of collaboration and communication resulting in the procurement of new datasets, duplicated activity in the testing of

processes and development of new land databases to support grant delivery. Customers are frustrated due to submitting data or informing field officers multiple times about their land

- Data debt – there are no feedback loops to the data owners of land data. This leads to inconsistent data across the group.
- Data Sharing – sharing of data is hindered by inconsistent Geospatial data standards being used across the group and supporting effective delivery of regulation and policy development as identified in the Corry Review (2025).

The purpose of the Geospatial Enabling Programme is to improve efficiency, support the public and to help to deliver Defra outcomes and objectives.

The programme will be split into 2 stages 1) alpha/design stage 2) Delivery and Transition to BAU

Stage 1 outcomes will be achieved through 5 areas of work, by:

#### Completing a basemap of England (Land)

- Assess current geospatial land data requirements and future requirements, attributes needed, establishing data gaps, inaccuracies, inefficiencies and duplications across Defra and 6 ALBs
- Prototypes of the data product solution based on user and business defined requirements
- Create user journey profiles for all user types
- Prototypes current technology ability to house/store/support solution or propose alternative
- Prototypes to consider feedback functionality for updating by Defra and ALBs user group
- Outline constraints
- Following DDTS and GDS standards

#### Common set of geospatial land data standards

- Define current as is position across the geospatial teams across Defra group and 6 ALBs.
- Identify the current usage of Inspire data standards

- Through user research establish the blockers with using inspire
- Design framework based on user and business requirements
- Ensure solution aligns with evolving metadata standards as part of Defra Enterprise Data Catalogue delivery

#### Land Model including Foundational Data Sets

- Business/user requirements and user journey maps defined across Defra group and 6 ALBs
- Prototypes based on user and business defined requirements
- Ensure prototypes are compatible with the basemap (common spatial framework) data product
- Design prototypes (made up of common spatial framework and at least 2 foundational data sets) and test to prove compatibility and usability
- Design and test prototypes in line with Defra testing policy-including user testing, functional testing and outcome testing

#### Central support model to maintain, improve and govern

- Through the stages of user/business requirement gathering, prototyping and solution design, outline the capability and service design need to provide a central support model

#### Geospatial requirements for an Enterprise Data Catalogue

- Collation of geospatial data users' requirements for an enterprise data catalogue in collaboration with DDTS

The above is neither an exhaustive nor a final set of requirements. It is subject to development prior to any potential subsequent contract opportunity notice utilising the outputs from the RFI responses.

### 3. Questions

To inform the Contracting Authority's understanding of what the market can deliver please answer the following questions. In doing so please use your discretion as to the level of detail you wish to provide. Your responses will not be treated as a commitment by the Contracting Authority to award a future contract.

Please note that your response for the below should be no more than twelve (12) A4

pages using Arial 10-point type.

### Q3.1. Scope of Service

- (i) Please provide your comments on the attached draft requirements (listed in the “Background” section of this document), highlighting whether you consider any of these requirements could be challenging to provide.
- (ii) Please identify if you consider there to be any omissions in the requirements given the scope of the type of service we are looking for?
- (iii) What geospatial programmes/projects have you delivered in the past/currently?
- (iv) What ideas do you have to implement the services?
- (v) What experience do you have with exiting large and complex contracts?
- (vi) What experience do you have with stakeholder management and how would you manage a complex set of stakeholders?

### Q3.2. Commercial

- (i) Are you content with the route to market and joining the framework?
- (ii) Typically, how would you expect to charge for the services and how, if at all, would this differ dependent upon the functionality provided and any development roadmap considerations?
- (iii) Please provide your thoughts on the proposed contract length and extension options. Would you recommend an alternative and why?
- (iv) Within the Optional Work Packages (described above), the Buyer would like to consider how these should be priced? We are planning on a fixed contract element of ~30% which is dependent on the completion of milestone delivery, the remainder of the work package being delivered through time and materials. Would you like to provide any feedback on this?

### Q3.3. Small and Medium-sized Enterprises

The UK government's target for government spending with Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs) is 33% of its procurement spend. The Buyer considers this procurement to be a key opportunity to use SMEs to deliver vital aspects of the Services to achieve the outcomes:

- i) What barriers to entry do you feel would prevent SMEs from applying for this opportunity?
- ii) Have you got any suggestions to mitigate these potential barriers?

### Q3.4. Technical

- (i) What experience do you have analysing institutional and diverse user requirements, resulting in improvements and efficiencies to the use of spatial and non-spatial data?
- (ii) What experience do you have applying geospatial standards within a UK public sector organisation(s), and what were the resulting outcomes?

### Q3.5. Social Value

<sup>1</sup>, DEFRA is required to explicitly evaluate social value, where the requirements are related and proportionate to the subject-matter of the contract. DEFRA would encourage prospective tenderers to review the social value model<sup>2</sup> and consider the below questions against the below outcomes:

- This procurement seeks to generate employment and training opportunities for individuals seeking to advance their careers in the geospatial sector, therefore helping to close the skills gap the industry is facing.
  - This procurement aims to deliver additional environmental benefits through contract performance, including progress toward achieving net zero greenhouse gas emissions.
- i) Considering the above, please can you describe ways in which you plan to incorporate social value when delivering this contract.

### Q3.6. Additional Information

- i) Is there anything you would like to add?

## 4. Questions and Clarifications

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/procurement-policy-note-0620-taking-account-of-social-value-in-the-award-of-central-government-contracts>

<sup>2</sup> [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/940826/Social-Value-Model-Edn-1.1-3-Dec-20.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/940826/Social-Value-Model-Edn-1.1-3-Dec-20.pdf)

- Suppliers may raise questions or seek clarification regarding any aspect of this RFI document at any time prior to the 'Clarification Period Closes' deadline. Questions must be submitted via email sent to [izabella.roberts@defra.gov.uk](mailto:izabella.roberts@defra.gov.uk).
- To ensure that all Suppliers have equal access to information regarding this Procurement, responses to questions raised by Suppliers will be published in a questions and answers document, which will be published on the Early Engagement Notice that this Engagement is attached to. This document with all answers included will be available on the Notice from 29/05/2025 after 1400hrs.
- Responses to questions will not identify the originator of the question.
- If a Supplier wishes to ask a question or seek clarification without the question and answer being published in this way, then the Supplier must notify DEFRA and provide its justification for withholding the question and any response. If the Authority does not consider that there is sufficient justification for withholding the question and the corresponding response, the Supplier will be invited to decide whether:
  - The question/clarification and the response should in fact be published; or
  - It wishes to withdraw the question/clarification.

## 5. RFI Next Steps

Please note all CQ questions will be shared on the Early Engagement Notice.

Following receipt of responses, we intend to review the responses and will only be used for reasons outlined in this RFI document.

Suppliers should highlight in their response to this RFI any specific information that they consider commercially sensitive.

An outline of next steps/future activities and timescales is included below.

<b>RFI issued</b>	23/05/2025 1200hrs
<b>Supplier RFI response deadline</b>	02/06/2025 1700hrs
<b>RTM and Potential Opportunity of ITT submission</b>	w/c 30/06/2025

**Please send all queries and responses via email to**

**[izabella.roberts@defra.gov.uk](mailto:izabella.roberts@defra.gov.uk)**

**no later than 1700 BST on 03 June 2025.**