

# **INVITATION TO TENDER**

## **SPECIFICATION**

For the Provision of a Contract to Supply  
Intranet User Research to the Valuation Office  
Agency via the Research Marketplace DPS  
(RM6018)

VOA/2021/056 for the VOA

## 1. INTRODUCTION

- The Valuation Office Agency (VOA) is an executive agency of her Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC). As the public sector's property valuation experts, we provide valuations and property advice to the government and local authorities in England, Scotland and Wales to support taxation and targeted financial support for families and individuals. The VOA also provide property valuation and surveying services to public sector bodies. Its work includes:
  - compiling and maintaining lists of council tax bands for approximately 26 million domestic properties;
  - compiling and maintaining lists detailing the rateable value of over 2 million commercial properties for business rates;
  - determining Local Housing Allowance rates across England;
  - advising local authorities of the maximum subsidy level payable for Housing Benefit claims under the local reference rent system;
  - maintaining a register of fair rents for regulated tenancies in England;
  - providing statutory valuations to support taxes administered by HMRC and the administration of benefits by the Department for Work and Pensions; and
  - providing a range of independent property advice and valuations across the public sector.
- Please see [www.voa.gov.uk](http://www.voa.gov.uk) for further details.

## 2. BACKGROUND

- The VOA is replacing its current intranet and moving to a new, modern and sustainable intranet technology platform in 2022.

- The VOA intranet contains around 6,500 pages, a large proportion of which contain out of date information or do not meet the required quality and Government Digital Service (GDS) accessibility standards.
- Colleagues have fed back that the intranet search facility can be poor. The over bloated content is a cause of this as well as the lack of or inconsistent use of metadata. This can make it challenging for colleagues to find the right information and guidance, because content isn't picked up by the search engine.
- As part of the new intranet project, the VOA will carry out a full content review including a rationalisation and analysis of the structure of content on the current intranet. Content will not be 'lifted and shifted' to the new solution.
- The VOA will draft a new content strategy for the intranet which sets out:
  - Content principles and quality standards,
  - Retention policy
  - Content owners' responsibilities
- The VOA have agreed some principles for the new intranet:
  - Contains only the content that is needed, it is not an information repository.
  - Supporting tasks: Helping to reduce the time it takes colleagues to complete key tasks.
  - Supporting users: Give the user what they need first.
  - Quality content: Meets writing for the web and accessibility standards.
  - The communications team are committed to continuously improve the intranet.
- The VOA last conducted some user research on the intranet in 2018 with a sample of 18 colleagues. The colleagues were predominately from Corporate Teams, rather than the core business areas.

### **3. REQUIREMENT**

- The VOA is seeking to:
  - Understand the key tasks colleagues across all operational business areas use the intranet for and how they carry these out on the current intranet.

- Identify the top tasks colleagues complete on the intranet and how long they perceive it takes them to complete each task. This information will be gathered through interviewing/talking to colleagues as they complete the tasks.
- Understand through qualitative research with operational colleagues their experiences with using the current intranet to complete their key tasks and find information they need.
- Understand colleagues' biggest frustrations with finding information they need on the intranet.
- This information will be gathered through a combination of interviews/meetings with colleagues and navigating the intranet. The supplier will be provided with access to the intranet (to be confirmed pending security clearance).
- The VOA will provide the names of colleagues to participate in the research. The sample size will be around 20 colleagues from mixed operational business areas, including line managers and non-managers.
- Expected timeline for undertaking the research: 4 to 5 weeks.
- We would need to have the research completed and findings reported by 13<sup>th</sup> May 2022.
- The final report must include details of colleagues' biggest frustrations with the current intranet as well as the top 10 tasks they complete on the intranet and how they complete these, as well as length of time it takes to complete each task.
- The final report must also include a summary of responses from all interviews with colleagues.
- All the raw data will need to be handed over and the supplier must adhere to HMRC / VOA GDPR rules, for example delete all personal data collected.
- We will use the research findings to inform the intranet homepage design and content/navigation layout for the new intranet.

## **4. MANAGEMENT INFORMATION**

As a minimum we would expect to be able to access;

- A project kick-off meeting.
- A weekly call with the user research lead to understand progress against final reporting.
- A final meeting at the end of the project to discuss the findings of the report.

## 5. TIMETABLE

- Please see below an indicative timetable to outline delivery of the tender.

DATE	ACTIVITY
11/03/2022	Publication of ITT. Clarification period starts.
12pm midday 18/03/2022	Clarification period closes (“ <b>Tender Clarifications Deadline</b> ”)
12pm midday 25/03/2022	Deadline for submission of a Tender to the Authority Contract (“ <b>Tender Submission Deadline</b> ”)
04/04/2022	Proposed Award Date of Contract
05/04/2022	Expected commencement date for the Contract

## 6. CONTRACT TERM

- The contract term will be for a period of two months/ completion of work. Work must be completed and invoiced by 13<sup>th</sup> May 2022.

## 7. VOA CONTRACT MANAGER DETAILS

- The VOA contract manager will be Natalie Lintern ([Natalie.lintern@voa.gov.uk](mailto:Natalie.lintern@voa.gov.uk)) .
- The VOA reserves the right to appoint an alternative contract manager at any given point throughout the duration of the contract.

- The supplier will be required to appoint a contract manager to serve as the VOA's point of contact within the organisation.

## 8. PAYMENT TERMS

- Payments will be made via an electronic payments system, SAP Ariba P2P (MYBuy). Invoices should be provided for each milestone within one month of agreement of deliverables and sent to [voainvoices.ap@hmrc.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:voainvoices.ap@hmrc.gsi.gov.uk) copying in **contract manager email address** (including the purchase order provided). Payments will be made into the bank account provided by the supplier.

## 9. TERMS AND CONDITIONS



Model Short Form  
VOA Ts&Cs.doc

## 10. TENDER REQUIREMENTS

- **Quality Criteria (this will form 80% of the evaluation)**
  - What is your proposed methodology for meeting the requirement within the timelines set out? (50%)  
(Maximum 1 side of A4 font 12)
  - Who will make up your proposed project team and what are their relevant skills and experience? How will you mitigate for any potential staff absences to ensure the project is run on time? (30%)  
(Maximum 1 side of A4 font 12)
  - How will you manage the contract, ensuring the project is run on time and clear weekly updates are provided? (20%)  
(Maximum 1 side of A4 font 1)

- **Pricing (This will form 20% of the evaluation)**

Please provide a firm and final price with full breakdown of costs (including expenses, excluding VAT) for undertaking this commission. If there are any variables these must be clearly specified in your submission. Please also provide an hourly rate for any additional services.

(Maximum 1 side of A4 font 12)



Price Proposal.xlsx

## **11. SCORING**

- Scores will be allocated for each quality question in line with the scoring scheme located in Appendix A. The maximum available score will be 100.
- The contract will be awarded to the Tender with the highest combined cost and quality score.

## **12. TENDER QUERIES**

- Tenderers with any queries about the requirement should contact [tenders@voa.gov.uk](mailto:tenders@voa.gov.uk) by email before **12pm on 18/03/2022** with the subject title **“VOA Intranet Research Tender Query”**.

## **13. TENDER SUBMISSION**

- You should send a PDF or read-only electronic copy of your proposal by e-mail to [tenders@voa.gov.uk](mailto:tenders@voa.gov.uk), as an attachment to an e-mail message entitled **“VOA Intranet Research Tender Submission”**. Tender to arrive **no later than 12pm on 25/03/2022** (unless the date is subsequently amended in writing by the VOA).

- Please note that email messages with this title will not be opened in advance of that deadline. No hard copies of the tender are required.



## **Appendix A**

<b>Score</b>	<b>'Closed' Question Criteria</b>	<b>'Open' Question Criteria</b>
<b>100</b>	Excellent answer which meets all of the requirements and provides all of the required detail.	<p>An excellent response that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• is completely relevant, addressing all of the requirements;</li> <li>• demonstrates an excellent understanding of the requirements, is comprehensive, robust and unambiguous;</li> <li>• provides highly credible supporting evidence, benefits or innovation; and/or</li> <li>• meets the requirements in all aspects, with no ambiguity or weaknesses identified and no clarification required.</li> </ul>
<b>80</b>	Good answer which meets all of the requirements but lacks some minor detail	<p>A good response that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• is highly relevant, addressing all of the requirements;</li> <li>• demonstrates a good understanding of the requirements and is comprehensive;</li> <li>• provides supporting evidence of sufficient detail; and/or</li> <li>• meets the requirements in all aspects, but contains minor weaknesses or a small amount of ambiguity.</li> </ul>
<b>60</b>	Satisfactory answer, which meets the requirements in many aspects, but fails to provide sufficient detail in some areas.	<p>A satisfactory response that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• is relevant, addressing most or all of the requirements;</li> <li>• demonstrates a satisfactory understanding of the requirements;</li> <li>• provides supporting evidence but lacks detail in some areas; and/or</li> <li>• meets the requirements in most aspects, but contains manageable weaknesses or some ambiguity and may require some</li> </ul>
<b>40</b>	Limited answer which satisfies some aspects of the requirements, but fails to meet the specification in the whole.	<p>A limited response that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• is mostly relevant, addressing most of the requirements;</li> <li>• demonstrates a limited understanding of the requirements;</li> <li>• provides supporting evidence but lacks detail in</li> </ul>

Score	'Closed' Question Criteria	'Open' Question Criteria
		<p>some or most areas; and/or</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>contains weaknesses or ambiguity which suggest that the requirements would not be met unless clarified.</li> </ul>
<b>20</b>	Poor answer which significantly fails to meet the requirements.	<p>A poor response that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>is only partially relevant, addressing some of the requirements;</li> <li>demonstrates a poor understanding of the requirements;</li> <li>provides supporting evidence that is of limited/insufficient detail or explanation; and/or</li> <li>contains multiple and/or significant weaknesses or ambiguity that suggest the requirements would not be met.</li> </ul>
<b>0</b>	<p>The response is not considered relevant.</p> <p>The response is unconvincing, flawed or otherwise unacceptable.</p> <p>Response fails to demonstrate an understanding of the requirement.</p> <p>No evidence is provided to support the response.</p> <p>Or nil response.</p>	<p>An unacceptable response that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>is not fully relevant, addressing some or none of the requirements;</li> <li>demonstrates very limited or no understanding of the requirements;</li> <li>provides little or no supporting evidence that is of insufficient detail or explanation; and/or</li> <li>is unconvincing, flawed or otherwise inadequate, suggesting that the requirements will not be met.</li> </ul> <p>Or nil response.</p>