

**Request for Proposal**

**Type 2 SOC 2 Audit**

*2022-2025*

Introduction

The aim of this document is to select and appoint a provider for the following activity/service:

*Type 2 SOC 2 Audit, including a readiness assessment initially, followed by ongoing audits to 2025.*

This document presents the detailed purpose and requirements of providers wishing to submit a proposal for this contract opportunity.

Key Documents

1. Document A Request for Proposal, Instructions and Specification (this document)
2. Document B Supplier Selection Questionnaire (To be completed)
3. Draft Terms and Conditions Agreement with Data Sharing Schedules (attached)

Procurement Timescales

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| **Timing**  | **Activity**  |
| 14th September 2022 | Invitation to submit a proposal issued  |
| 30th September 2022 | Deadline for proposal submission deadline |
| 18th October 2022 | Envisaged Award date  |
| 21st October 2022 | Initiation Meeting  |

Introduction to The Growth Company

The Growth Company is a not-for-profit, social enterprise dedicated to economic development, inward investment, skills, employment and enterprise. Our head office is based in Manchester, UK, and we have a number of sites across the North of England.

We are driven by our successes and leave a lasting legacy of growth wherever we work and whoever we work with.

Further information regarding the Growth Company can be found at the GC website [www.growthco.uk](http://www.growthco.uk)

Your Data and Information

At the Growth Company we recognise the importance of the privacy and the security of your personal information. Please see the below link to our Group Privacy Notice which explains how we process and look after your personal information and data.

<http://www.growthco.uk/privacy-policy/>

About the SOC 2 Type 2 Audit

As part of our Restart contracts, GC is contractually obliged to conduct SOC 2 type 2 audits and we are procuring these services on a whole organisation approach.

SOC (Service Organisational Controls) reporting is designed to provide assurances about the effectiveness of controls in place at an organisation and is an auditing procedure that ensures that service provider(s) securely manage data to protect the interests of an organization and the privacy of its clients (or in this case - Authorities).

*Head contract clause - The Supplier shall engage an independent auditor registered with the AICPA or, as the case may be, the IAASB (such auditors, the “SOC Auditors”) to conduct a service organisation control (“SOC”) SOC2 Type 2 audit (“SOC2T2”) in accordance with the SSAE 16 and/or ISAE 3402.*

*The Supplier shall maintain at least annual renewals of SOC2T2 in accordance with SSAE 16 and/or ISAE 3402 during the Term.*

Period of Delivery

It is currently envisaged that the activity will be delivered from late 2022 for a period to the end of the Restart contract, anticipated to be July 2025.

Requirements of the successful bidder

* Competitive pricing structure and value for money
* Comprehensive knowledge and delivery of SOC 2 controls and requirements
* Document / evidence sharing platforms
* Extensive experience of delivering audit and assurance activity across the SOC 2 Type 2 controls, ideally with other DWP contract holders.
* Accredited ISO 27001 Certification Body
* Registered with the AICPA or the IAASB
* A demonstrable track record of conducting SOC 2 Audits to a high standard in line with industry best practice
* In-depth knowledge and understanding of the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) requirements, key stakeholders and the current market

Key Deliverables

* Provide an in-depth readiness assessment for The Growth Company, inclusive of a comprehensive report and development of a mitigation plan ahead of the initial SOC 2 Type 2 audit.
* Deliver an ongoing programme of audit activity and assurance testing to ensure The Growth Company can provide evidence of annual renewals against the audit criteria to the relevant Authorities.

Key Project Milestones

The key milestones of the evaluation will be no later than as follows: -

* Kick off Meeting – October 2022
* By February 2023 an in-depth readiness assessment, report and a mitigation plan.
* July 2023 – Audit 1 complete
* July 2024 – Audit 2 complete
* July 2025 – Audit 3 complete

Deliver an ongoing programme of audit activity and assurance testing to ensure The Growth Company can provide evidence of annual renewals against the audit criteria to the relevant Authorities.

Application Process

To apply for this opportunity, you are required to submit a written proposal and complete and return the Supplier Selection Questionnaire V1.0 (Document B).

Written Proposal Brief

The maximum total number of pages permissible in your proposal is 10 pages. Word counts have not been set; however, a concise, structured response is required, following the headings set out in the proposal brief. The pricing proposal does not count toward the total page count.

Appendices, charts, diagrams or screenshots may be included, but will count towards the total page limit, unless where specifically stated.

The evaluation team will not consider any references to external sources/hyperlinks referenced in your bid, unless where requested.

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| **Areas to be covered** | **Weighting** |
| 1. **Experience and capability of undertaking similar audits**
 | **10%** |
| 1. **Professional ability / proven track record**
 | **10%** |
| 1. **Approach to the requirement and proposed high level audit plan**
 | **30%** |
| 1. **Social Value** Please refer to Annex 1 for details
 | **10%** |
| 1. **Price** **(Value for money)**

Total price for the project. Please provide a full breakdown of your pricing per year. Identify Number of days to capture relevant information and preparation time. Please also include your day rate. The price presented must include all travel and subsistence that will be undertaken by the successful applicant during the project. No additional out-of-pocket expenses will be accepted and therefore bidders must effectively budget to allow travel where required within the geographical scope of the project.  | **40%** |

Evaluation

The above proposal section sets out the weighting of each element of the assessment.

Your proposal will be evaluated following the below approach to quality and value.

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| **Criteria**  | **Weighting**  |
| Quality | 60% |
| Value for Money | 40% |
| Total | 100% |

Scoring of Quality Questions

Responses to each of the quotation questions will be scored out of a maximum of five marks, using a standard method of scoring as set out in the table below:

|  |  |  |
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| **Classification** | **Score** | **Scoring Principals** |
| Excellent | 5 | Exceeds the required standardResponse answers the question with precision and relevance. Includes improvement through innovation/added value |
| Good | 4 | Meets the standard required. Comprehensive response in terms of detail and relevance to the question. |
| Satisfactory | 3 | Meets the standard in most aspects but fails in some areas.Acceptable level of detail, accuracy and relevance. |
| Partial | 2 | Fails the standard in most aspects but meet some.Limited information / inadequate /only partially addresses the question |
| Poor | 1\* | Significantly fails to meet the standard.Inadequate detail provided / questions not answered / answers not directly relevant in the question. |
| Unacceptable | 0\* | Completely fails to meet the standard. Response significantly deficient / no response. |

**\*Any Bidder scoring a 0 or 1 for any questions may be excluded from the process.**

Price Evaluation

The lowest priced submission will be awarded the maximum price score for that element of the offer. Bidders will thereafter be ranked and scored in accordance with how much more expensive their prices were compared to the lowest price.

Pricing score = (Lowest Submitted Cost ÷Tender Cost) x 100

Please see a worked example below:

Bidder 1 Price - £110

Bidder 2 Price - £175

Bidder 3 Price - £200

Bidder 1 would receive 100 marks as they submitted the lowest price.

Bidder 2 would receive 62.9 marks as follows: 110/175 \* 100 = 62.9

Bidder 3 would receive 55 marks as follows: 110/200 \* 100 = 55

The score will then be weighted to give a resultant score out of the weighting % set out in this document for the pricing submission. All prices quoted shall be inclusive of VAT.

All pricing must be fully broken down and transparent for all services and expenses.

**Contract Award**

Following completion of the evaluation, final scores will be collated and ranked.

GC reserves the right to invite the top scoring bidder / bidders for interview to clarify elements of their bid.

The evaluation panel will then make a recommendation to award the Contract to the highest-ranking bidder.

Proposal Return

Please return an emailed copy of your completed proposal and Document B by:

**17:00 on 30th September 2022** to Cheryl.collins@gcemployment.uk

Contract Conditions

The Contract/Framework Agreement and all tasks carried out under the agreement will be governed by The Growth Company Limited Agreement and Data Sharing Schedules (attached).

**Annex 1 Social Value**

Social Value can be defined as ‘a process whereby organisations meet their needs for goods, services, works and utilities in a way that achieves value for money on a whole life basis in terms of generating benefits not only to the organisation, but also to society and economy, whilst minimising damage and where possible making improvements to the environment.’

At the Growth Company we see Social Value as the additional social, economic and environmental benefit that can be generated through our contracts with suppliers.

We want to know what our suppliers and contractors do to make a positive contribution to their communities, our society, the economy and the environment and what additional contribution they can make in the delivery of our contract.

**In this section, please set out your business values, how you include social value in your business operations, such as through your employment practices, volunteering, environmental policies, Equality & Diversity Policies.**

GC seek to drive positive outcomes by focussing on the following objectives.

* promote and provide good employment and economic sustainability – tackle unemployment and increase staff retention through positive employment practices including working towards the real living wage and maximising employee access to entitlements such as flexible working and health and wellbeing support and facilitate the development of skills.
* Build skills and work opportunities for now and the future - encourage resident participation and promote active citizenship.
* Support community resilience and growth with practical support for local voluntary and community groups.
* promote equity and fairness – target effort towards those in the greatest need or facing the greatest disadvantage and tackle deprivation
* promote environmental sustainability – reduce wastage, limit energy consumption and procure materials from sustainable sources.