

Invitation to Quote

Invitation to Quote (ITQ) on behalf of **UK Research and Innovation**

Subject: **UK SBS RE18349 FTIR Base System**

Sourcing Reference Number: **RE18349**



UK Shared Business Services Ltd (UK SBS)
www.uksbs.co.uk

Registered in England and Wales as a limited company. Company Number 6330639.
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VAT registration GB618 3673 25
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Table of Contents

Section	Content
1	<u>About UK Shared Business Services Ltd.</u>
2	<u>About the Contracting Authority</u>
3	<u>Working with the Contracting Authority.</u>
4	<u>Specification</u>
5	<u>Evaluation model</u>
6	<u>Evaluation questionnaire</u>
7	<u>General Information</u>
Annex A	Specification

Section 1 – About UK Shared Business Services

Putting the business into shared services

UK Shared Business Services Ltd (UK SBS) brings a commercial attitude to the public sector; helping our Contracting Authorities improve efficiency, generate savings and modernise.

It is our vision to become the leading service provider for the Contracting Authorities of shared business services in the UK public sector, continuously reducing cost and improving quality of business services for Government and the public sector.

Our broad range of expert services is shared by our Contracting Authorities. This allows Contracting Authorities the freedom to focus resources on core activities; innovating and transforming their own organisations.

Core services include Procurement, Finance, Grants Admissions, Human Resources, Payroll, ISS, and Property Asset Management all underpinned by our Service Delivery and Contact Centre teams.

UK SBS is a people rather than task focused business. It's what makes us different to the traditional transactional shared services centre. What is more, being a not-for-profit organisation owned by the Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy (BEIS), UK SBS' goals are aligned with the public sector and delivering best value for the UK taxpayer.

UK Shared Business Services Ltd changed its name from RCUK Shared Services Centre Ltd in March 2013.

Our Customers

Growing from a foundation of supporting the Research Councils, 2012/13 saw Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) transition their procurement to UK SBS and Crown Commercial Services (CCS – previously Government Procurement Service) agree a Memorandum of Understanding with UK SBS to deliver two major procurement categories (construction and research) across Government.

UK SBS currently manages £700m expenditure for its Contracting Authorities.

Our Contracting Authorities who have access to our services and Contracts are detailed [here](#).

Section 2 – About the Contracting Authority

UK Research and Innovation

Operating across the whole of the UK and with a combined budget of more than £6 billion, UK Research and Innovation represents the largest reform of the research and innovation funding landscape in the last 50 years.

As an independent non-departmental public body UK Research and Innovation brings together the seven Research Councils (AHRC, BBSRC, EPSRC, ESRC, MRC, NERC, STFC) plus Innovate UK and a new organisation, Research England.

UK Research and Innovation ensures the UK maintains its world-leading position in research and innovation. This is done by creating the best environment for research and innovation to flourish.

For more information, please visit: www.ukri.org

Section 3 - Working with the Contracting Authority.

In this section you will find details of your Procurement contact point and the timescales relating to this opportunity.

Section 3 – Contact details		
3.1	Contracting Authority Name and address	UK Research and Innovation Polaris House Swindon SN2 1FL
3.2	Buyer name	Rosie Clarke
3.3	Buyer contact details	research.tenders@uksbs.co.uk 01793 867 226
3.4	Estimated value of the Opportunity	£90,000 GBP excluding vat
3.5	Process for the submission of clarifications and Bids	All correspondence shall be submitted within the Emptoris e-sourcing tool. Guidance Notes to support the use of Emptoris is available here. Please note submission of a Bid to any email address including the Buyer <u>will</u> result in the Bid <u>not</u> being considered.

Section 3 - Timescales		
3.6	Date of Issue of Contract Advert and location of original Advert	Friday 27 th July 2018 Contracts Finder
3.7	Latest date/time ITQ clarification questions shall be received through Emptoris messaging system	Wednesday 1 st August 2018 14.00
3.8	Latest date/time ITQ clarification answers should be sent to all Bidders by the Buyer through Emptoris	Thursday 2 nd August 2018 14.00
3.9	Latest date/time ITQ Bid shall be submitted through Emptoris	Monday 6 th August 2018 14.00
3.10	Anticipated notification date of successful and unsuccessful Bids	Tuesday 14 th August 2018 14.00
3.11	Anticipated Award date	Wednesday 15 th August 2018
3.12	Anticipated Contract Start date	Friday 17 th August 2018
3.13	Anticipated Contract End date	Provisionally 16 th August 2019, however this may be adjusted dependant on the Service Agreement offered
3.14	Bid Validity Period	60 Days

Section 4 – Specification

The Fourier Transform Infra-red (FTIR) Imaging system and Microscope to be used for analysis of small plastic pieces (ranging from 5 mm down to ideally 1µm) termed microplastics in environmental particle samples.

It must be understood that the quote include total costs for the following 4 elements:

- all equipment needed to have a fully working FTIR and microscope setup.
- the costs for any auxiliary elements needed for the functional use and operation as per the specifications below.
- The offered warranty
- Extended service contract for planned preventative maintenance and call outs.

The FTIR imaging system must meet the following **general requirements**:

- Ability to rapidly detect and image small particles down to 10 µm or smaller (FTIR transmission/reflectance). Fast scanning/data acquisition for numeration and sizing of microplastics is a priority for our work; the spectral data quality for polymer characterisation is also important.
- As the areas to image will be 13mm diameter filters the scan times may be long and requires the system quoted for to be able to run data acquisition unattended and in automated mode overnight.
- There must be a guarantee that scientists from any country may potentially use the instrument at CEH, and we must be able to potentially move it between our UK CEH sites.
- Potential for NIR imaging upgrade in the future is advantageous.
- The bidder must provide answers to the questions at the end of the specification in support of their bid meeting the required specifications.

Specific requirements for the FTIR Microscope and Imaging System are summarised below.

FTIR Spectrometer design and performance

- **IR source** will have the following characteristics:
 - Operates primarily in Mid-IR region (4000 – 400 cm⁻¹). Extension to Near-IR spectral region and/or possibility for dual (mid-near IR) operation are advantageous.
 - Have high short- and long-term stability and reproducible output.
 - The IR source must be user-replaceable.
 - Sealed/desiccated or purged optical enclosure.
- **Humidity monitor** to ensure that the ambient levels of CO₂ and H₂O vapour in the optical unit are known and can be automatically corrected for during or after analysis.
- **Beam-splitter** characteristics will include:
 - Optimisation for mid-IR region (>4000 – ≤400 cm⁻¹)
 - Controlled mirror alignment .
 - Extension to Near-IR spectral region and/or possibility for dual (mid-near IR) operation are advantageous.
- **IR detector element(s)**
 - Must have broad spectral range in order to enable separation of all common polymers.

- Having the widest available spectral range will also allow greater flexibility of the system for future use.
- High-sensitivity and throughput in the mid-IR region.
- Detector that also offer dual range (NIR-MIR) sensitivity without compromising the MIR sensitivity will be regarded advantageous.
- Spectral resolution should be better than 0.5 cm^{-1} (FTIR spectrometer) and better than 4 cm^{-1} (imaging).

IR Imaging and Microscope design and performance

- High-sensitivity and throughput in the mid-IR region.
- Can operate in both transmission and reflectance modes producing high quality IR images
- Collection of multiple IR images from different sample areas in a single experiment (alternative designs enabling high speed mapping of large areas (i.e. to cover the 13mm diameter filters most effectively) are acceptable).
- Variable IR spatial/pixel resolution
 - Having the capability to scan at different pixel sizes with a core range between 50 and $10\mu\text{m}$ (or smaller) to allow more flexibility will be a benefit. As an example, a large area can be image quickly with large pixel mode (e.g. $25\mu\text{m}$), while other images might require the best possible spatial resolution i.e. $10\mu\text{m}$ or smaller.
- Rapid scan rate with >100 (the higher the better) full-range spectra/second at 16 cm^{-1} resolution.
- Fast IR imaging of large and small areas at high spatial resolution.
- High resolution visible camera fully integrated with the microscope stage motion and IR data acquisition both in transmission and reflectance modes.
- Visible LED light source that lasts the lifespan of the system.
- Mechanically stable when switching between IR and Visible modes.
- Fully automated microscope/imaging, including but not limited to:
 - Illumination
 - Focus
 - Stage control
 - Switch between Visible and IR modes (simultaneous view is acceptable)
 - Switch between transmittance and reflectance modes
 - Throughput correction
- Atmospheric correction utility/algorithm for H_2O and CO_2 without nitrogen purge (alternative designs ensuring that sample spectra are not influenced by H_2O and CO_2 spectra are acceptable).
- Chemical identification.
- Automated particles finder from visible image.
- Post-processing.
- The system must be upgradable to incorporate Attenuated Total Reflectance (ATR) objective with ATR imaging accessory.

Micro-ATR objective

- Fully automated.
- Must be completely controlled by the software.
- High refractive index (e.g. Germanium).
- Crystal tip made of material which ensures both robustness and high spatial resolution
- Wide spectral range.

ATR imaging accessory would be a preferable addition, but is not mandatory.

- Small pixel size for the best spatial resolution.
- ATR imaging crystal diameter in contact with sample > 400 µm to analyse large areas while avoiding cross-contamination.
- Wide spectral range.

Software

- Ability to perform real-time imaging to enhance speed, quality control and flexibility of IR data collection (equivalent designs meeting this requirement are acceptable).
- Includes extensive polymer reference spectral library (> 3000 polymer types or more).
- Multicomponent search software for multicomponent identification.
- Multiple areas can be analysed/imaged in a single experiment.
- Results export to Microsoft Office Excel and Word.
- Batch process and export of multiple spectra (i.e. ability to process, export and save multiple spectra at the same time).
- Suite of IR image analysis options and post-processing functions with multivariate analysis package with PCA and PLS.
- Multiple IR image and line-scan display modes, including interpolated false colour, false colour/contour, contour, 3-D wire grid and 3-D rendered surface.
- Export IR and visible images to other image analysis, display or reporting packages.

Customer training/support

- On-site training for initial familiarisation after installation at our site in Wallingford.
- Access to application and method development support and advice by a fully trained application specialist either visiting us in Wallingford or us visiting them at a demo site ideally local in the UK.
- Ongoing local scientific, technical and mechanical support through an included service agreement would be advantageous.

Required from the bidder

- The bidder is required to upload full details of the equipment being provided, including life expectancy of the equipment proposed assuming maintenance & support is kept up, spares and consumables, training, warranty, software upgrades and any options that can be offered.
- The bidder to specify the IR light source lifespan of the FTIR Microscope/Imaging system.
- It is important that the FTIR Microscope/Imaging system has detectors covering a wide wavelength range. Detector(s) that also offer NIR sensitivity without compromising the MIR sensitivity will be advantageous.
- The bidder to specify the variable spatial resolution the FTIR Microscope/Imaging system.
- The bidder specify lead time for the delivery and installation completion time for the new FTIR Microscope/Imaging system assuming contract awarded mid-August 2018, and any constraints on this. We must ideally have the system delivered, installed and operational by mid-September 2018.

- The bidder to confirm that all MCT linear array and FPA detectors will have high sensitivity throughout the whole spectral range for microplastics analysis. The bidder to provide SNR (p-p) achieved at 2200-2000 cm^{-1} wavelength, 4 cm^{-1} , 8 cm^{-1} , 16 cm^{-1} spectral resolution over a 4 seconds scan time per spectra in transmittance and reflectance modes of < 100 μm PE and PP particles. Provide SNR obtained from a single spectrum generated by a single pixel (co-added spectra from multiple pixels is not acceptable). Summarize your response in a table with the following categories
 - Type of detector
 - Sampling mode (transmittance/reflectance)
 - Wavelength range
 - Spectral resolution
 - SNR (p-p)
 - Successful spectral search and match with database? (Y/N)
- Bidder should explain how the SNR (p-p) was calculated.
- The bidder to specify the variable spatial and pixel resolution for the imaging detector included in the FTIR imaging system. The ability to operate at multiple spatial and pixel resolutions should be described and specified.
- Bidder to describe how the infrared imaging system will image large and small areas at variable spectral resolution. For imaging of 10mm x 10mm (large) and 12 μm x 12 μm (small) sample areas at 4, 8 and 16 cm^{-1} , the bidder summarise the performance in a table with the following categories.
 - Type of detector
 - Sampling mode (transmittance/reflectance)
 - Spectral resolution
 - Area scanned
 - SNR (p-p) 2200-2000 cm^{-1} wavelength for a single spectrum
 - Total scanning/imaging time
 - Number of spectra collected
- Bidder to provide information on licence(s) required to operate/use the system.
- Bidder to provide information how they are planning to support CEH to implement their method for microplastic analysis.
- Bidder must specify the expected running costs both per sample (if special slides or other consumables needed, they should be included in this calculation).
- Bidder must specify the expected per annum maintenance costs and service contracts.
- Bidder to describe how the costs per sample were calculated, as well as the per annum costs indicated above.

The bidder must specify lead time for the delivery and installation completion time, as per PROJ 1.4, for the new FTIR Microscope/Imaging system assuming contract awarded mid-August 2018, and any constraints on this. We must ideally have the system delivered, installed and operational by late September/first week of October or access to alternative analysis options be made available in the meantime.

All questions will be scored based on the 0 – 100 methodology

0	The Question is not answered or the response is completely unacceptable.
10	Extremely poor response – they have completely missed the point of the question.
20	Very poor response and not wholly acceptable. Requires major revision to the response to make it acceptable. Only partially answers the requirement, with major deficiencies and little relevant detail proposed.
40	Poor response only partially satisfying the selection question requirements with deficiencies apparent. Some useful evidence provided but response falls well short of expectations. Low probability of being a capable supplier.
60	Response is acceptable but remains basic and could have been expanded upon. Response is sufficient but does not inspire.
80	Good response which describes their capabilities in detail which provides high levels of assurance consistent with a quality provider. The response includes a full description of techniques and measurements currently employed.
100	Response is exceptional and clearly demonstrates they are capable of meeting the requirement. No significant weaknesses noted. The response is compelling in its description of techniques and measurements currently employed, providing full assurance consistent with a quality provider.

Terms and Conditions

Bidders are to note that any requested modifications to the Contracting Authority Terms and Conditions on the grounds of statutory and legal matters only, shall be raised as a formal clarification during the permitted clarification period.

Section 5 – Evaluation model

The evaluation model below shall be used for this ITQ, which will be determined to two decimal places.

Where a question is ‘for information only’ it will not be scored.

The evaluation team may comprise staff from UK SBS and the Contracting Authority and any specific external stakeholders the Contracting Authority deems required. After evaluation the scores will be finalised by performing a calculation to identify (at question level) the mean average of all evaluators (Example – a question is scored by three evaluators and judged as scoring 5, 5 and 6. These scores will be added together and divided by the number of evaluators to produce the final score of 5.33 ($5+5+6 = 16 \div 3 = 5.33$))

Pass / fail criteria		
Questionnaire	Q No.	Question subject
Commercial	SEL1.2	Employment breaches/ Equality
Commercial	SEL3.11	Compliance to Section 54 of the Modern Slavery Act
Commercial	SEL3.12	Cyber Essentials
Commercial	FOI1.1	Freedom of Information Exemptions
Commercial	AW1.1	Form of Bid
Commercial	AW1.3	Certificate of Bona Fide Bid
Commercial	AW3.1	Validation check
Commercial	AW4.1	Contract Terms Part 1
Commercial	AW4.2	Contract Terms Part 2
Price	AW5.5	E Invoicing
Quality	AW6.1	Compliance to the Specification
Quality	AW6.2	Variable Bids

Scoring criteria			
Evaluation Justification Statement			
<p>In consideration of this particular requirement the Contracting Authority has decided to evaluate Potential Providers by adopting the weightings/scoring mechanism detailed within this ITQ. The Contracting Authority considers these weightings to be in line with existing best practice for a requirement of this type.</p>			
Questionnaire	Q No.	Question subject	Maximum Marks
Price	AW5.2	Price Schedule	20%
Quality	PROJ1.1	Lifespan of the IR light source of the FTIR Microscope	10%
Quality	PROJ1.2	Imaging/mapping speed and quality of the IR spectra	15%
Quality	PROJ1.3	Spatial and Pixel Resolutions	10%

Quality	PROJ1.4	Delivery Date	20%
Quality	PROJ1.5	Ongoing Service Agreement	10%
Quality	PROJ1.6	Continuing Support	15%

Evaluation of criteria

Non-Price elements

Each question will be judged on a score from 0 to 100, which shall be subjected to a multiplier to reflect the percentage of the evaluation criteria allocated to that question.

Where an evaluation criterion is worth 20% then the 0-100 score achieved will be multiplied by 20%.

Example if a Bidder scores 60 from the available 100 points this will equate to 12% by using the following calculation:

$$\text{Score} = \{\text{weighting percentage}\} \times \{\text{bidder's score}\} = 20\% \times 60 = 12$$

The same logic will be applied to groups of questions which equate to a single evaluation criterion.

The 0-100 score shall be based on (unless otherwise stated within the question):

0	The Question is not answered or the response is completely unacceptable.
10	Extremely poor response – they have completely missed the point of the question.
20	Very poor response and not wholly acceptable. Requires major revision to the response to make it acceptable. Only partially answers the requirement, with major deficiencies and little relevant detail proposed.
40	Poor response only partially satisfying the selection question requirements with deficiencies apparent. Some useful evidence provided but response falls well short of expectations. Low probability of being a capable supplier.
60	Response is acceptable but remains basic and could have been expanded upon. Response is sufficient but does not inspire.
80	Good response which describes their capabilities in detail which provides high levels of assurance consistent with a quality provider. The response includes a full description of techniques and measurements currently employed.
100	Response is exceptional and clearly demonstrates they are capable of meeting the requirement. No significant weaknesses noted. The response is compelling in its description of techniques and measurements currently employed, providing full assurance consistent with a quality provider.

All questions will be scored based on the above mechanism. Please be aware that the final score returned may be different as there may be multiple evaluators and their individual scores will be averaged (mean) to determine your final score.

Example

Evaluator 1 scored your bid as 60

Evaluator 2 scored your bid as 60

Evaluator 3 scored your bid as 40

Evaluator 4 scored your bid as 40

Your final score will $(60+60+40+40) \div 4 = 50$

Price elements will be judged on the following criteria.

The lowest price for a response which meets the pass criteria shall score 100.

All other bids shall be scored on a pro rata basis in relation to the lowest price. The score is then subject to a multiplier to reflect the percentage value of the price criterion.

For example - Bid 1 £100,000 scores 100.

Bid 2 £120,000 differential of £20,000 or 20% remove 20% from price scores 80

Bid 3 £150,000 differential £50,000 remove 50% from price scores 50.

Bid 4 £175,000 differential £75,000 remove 75% from price scores 25.

Bid 5 £200,000 differential £100,000 remove 100% from price scores 0.

Bid 6 £300,000 differential £200,000 remove 100% from price scores 0.

Where the scoring criterion is worth 50% then the 0-100 score achieved will be multiplied by 50.

In the example if a supplier scores 80 from the available 100 points this will equate to 40% by using the following calculation: Score/Total Points multiplied by 50 ($80/100 \times 50 = 40$)

The lowest score possible is 0 even if the price submitted is more than 100% greater than the lowest price.

Section 6 – Evaluation questionnaire

Bidders should note that the evaluation questionnaire is located within the **e-sourcing questionnaire**.

Guidance on completion of the questionnaire is available at <http://www.uksbs.co.uk/services/procure/Pages/supplier.aspx>

PLEASE NOTE THE QUESTIONS ARE NOT NUMBERED SEQUENTIALLY

Section 7 – General Information

What makes a good bid – some simple do's 😊

DO:

- 7.1 Do comply with Procurement document instructions. Failure to do so may lead to disqualification.
- 7.2 Do provide the Bid on time, and in the required format. Remember that the date/time given for a response is the last date that it can be accepted; we are legally bound to disqualify late submissions. Responses received after the date indicated in the ITQ shall not be considered by the Contracting Authority, unless the Bidder can justify that the reason for the delay, is solely attributable to the Contracting Authority
- 7.3 Do ensure you have read all the training materials to utilise e-sourcing tool prior to responding to this Bid. If you send your Bid by email or post it will be rejected.
- 7.4 Do use Microsoft Word, PowerPoint Excel 97-03 or compatible formats, or PDF unless agreed in writing by the Buyer. If you use another file format without our written permission we may reject your Bid.
- 7.5 Do ensure you utilise the Emptoris messaging system to raise any clarifications to our ITQ. You should note that we will release the answer to the question to all Bidders and where we suspect the question contains confidential information we may modify the content of the question to protect the anonymity of the Bidder or their proposed solution
- 7.6 Do answer the question, it is not enough simply to cross-reference to a 'policy', web page or another part of your Bid, the evaluation team have limited time to assess bids and if they can't find the answer, they can't score it.
- 7.7 Do consider who the Contracting Authority is and what they want – a generic answer does not necessarily meet every Contracting Authority's needs.
- 7.8 Do reference your documents correctly, specifically where supporting documentation is requested e.g. referencing the question/s they apply to.
- 7.9 Do provide clear, concise and ideally generic contact details; telephone numbers, e-mails and fax details.
- 7.10 Do complete all questions in the questionnaire or we may reject your Bid.
- 7.11 Do ensure that the Response and any documents accompanying it are in the English Language, the Contracting Authority reserve the right to disqualify any full or part responses that are not in English.
- 7.12 Do check and recheck your Bid before dispatch.

What makes a good bid – some simple do not's Ⓜ

DO NOT

- 7.13 Do not cut and paste from a previous document and forget to change the previous details such as the previous buyer's name.
- 7.14 Do not attach 'glossy' brochures that have not been requested, they will not be read unless we have asked for them. Only send what has been requested and only send supplementary information if we have offered the opportunity so to do.
- 7.15 Do not share the Procurement documents, they are confidential and should not be shared with anyone without the Buyers written permission.
- 7.16 Do not seek to influence the procurement process by requesting meetings or contacting UK SBS or the Contracting Authority to discuss your Bid. If your Bid requires clarification the Buyer will contact you. All information secured outside of formal Buyer communications shall have no Legal standing or worth and should not be relied upon.
- 7.17 Do not contact any UK SBS staff or the Contracting Authority staff without the Buyers written permission or we may reject your Bid.
- 7.18 Do not collude to fix or adjust the price or withdraw your Bid with another Party as we will reject your Bid.
- 7.19 Do not offer UK SBS or the Contracting Authority staff any inducement or we will reject your Bid.
- 7.20 Do not seek changes to the Bid after responses have been submitted and the deadline for Bids to be submitted has passed.
- 7.21 Do not cross reference answers to external websites or other parts of your Bid, the cross references and website links will not be considered.
- 7.22 Do not exceed word counts, the additional words will not be considered.
- 7.23 Do not make your Bid conditional on acceptance of your own Terms of Contract, as your Bid will be rejected.
- 7.24 Do not unless explicitly requested by the Contracting Authority either in the procurement documents or via a formal clarification from the Contracting Authority send your response by any way other than via e-sourcing tool. Responses received by any other method than requested will not be considered for the opportunity.

Some additional guidance notes

- 7.25 All enquiries with respect to access to the e-sourcing tool and problems with functionality within the tool must be submitted to Crown Commercial Service (previously Government Procurement Service), Telephone 0345 010 3503.
- 7.26 Bidders will be specifically advised where attachments are permissible to support a question response within the e-sourcing tool. Where they are not permissible any attachments submitted will not be considered as part of the evaluation process.
- 7.27 Question numbering is not sequential and all questions which require submission are included in the Section 6 Evaluation Questionnaire.
- 7.28 Any Contract offered may not guarantee any volume of work or any exclusivity of supply.
- 7.29 We do not guarantee to award any Contract as a result of this procurement
- 7.30 All documents issued or received in relation to this procurement shall be the property of the Contracting Authority. / UKSBS.
- 7.31 We can amend any part of the procurement documents at any time prior to the latest date / time Bids shall be submitted through Emptoris.
- 7.32 If you are a Consortium you must provide details of the Consortiums structure.
- 7.33 Bidders will be expected to comply with the Freedom of Information Act 2000 or your Bid will be rejected.
- 7.34 Bidders should note the Government's transparency agenda requires your Bid and any Contract entered into to be published on a designated, publicly searchable web site. By submitting a response to this ITQ Bidders are agreeing that their Bid and Contract may be made public
- 7.35 Your bid will be valid for 60 days or your Bid will be rejected.
- 7.36 Bidders may only amend the contract terms during the clarification period only, only if you can demonstrate there is a legal or statutory reason why you cannot accept them. If you request changes to the Contract terms without such grounds and the Contracting Authority fail to accept your legal or statutory reason is reasonably justified we may reject your Bid.
- 7.37 We will let you know the outcome of your Bid evaluation and where requested will provide a written debrief of the relative strengths and weaknesses of your Bid.
- 7.38 If you fail mandatory pass / fail criteria we will reject your Bid.
- 7.39 Bidders are required to use IE8, IE9, Chrome or Firefox in order to access the functionality of the Emptoris e-sourcing tool.
- 7.40 Bidders should note that if they are successful with their proposal the Contracting Authority reserves the right to ask additional compliancy checks prior to the award of any Contract. In the event of a Bidder failing to meet one of the compliancy checks

the Contracting Authority may decline to proceed with the award of the Contract to the successful Bidder.

- 7.41 All timescales are set using a 24 hour clock and are based on British Summer Time or Greenwich Mean Time, depending on which applies at the point when Date and Time Bids shall be submitted through Emptoris.
- 7.42 All Central Government Departments and their Executive Agencies and Non Departmental Public Bodies are subject to control and reporting within Government. In particular, they report to the Cabinet Office and HM Treasury for all expenditure. Further, the Cabinet Office has a cross-Government role delivering overall Government policy on public procurement - including ensuring value for money and related aspects of good procurement practice.

For these purposes, the Contracting Authority may disclose within Government any of the Bidders documentation/information (including any that the Bidder considers to be confidential and/or commercially sensitive such as specific bid information) submitted by the Bidder to the Contracting Authority during this Procurement. The information will not be disclosed outside Government. Bidders taking part in this ITQ consent to these terms as part of the competition process.

- 7.43 The Government introduced its new Government Security Classifications (GSC) classification scheme on the 2nd April 2014 to replace the current Government Protective Marking System (GPMS). A key aspect of this is the reduction in the number of security classifications used. All Bidders are encouraged to make themselves aware of the changes and identify any potential impacts in their Bid, as the protective marking and applicable protection of any material passed to, or generated by, you during the procurement process or pursuant to any Contract awarded to you as a result of this tender process will be subject to the new GSC. The link below to the Gov.uk website provides information on the new GSC:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/government-security-classifications>

The Contracting Authority reserves the right to amend any security related term or condition of the draft contract accompanying this ITQ to reflect any changes introduced by the GSC. In particular where this ITQ is accompanied by any instructions on safeguarding classified information (e.g. a Security Aspects Letter) as a result of any changes stemming from the new GSC, whether in respect of the applicable protective marking scheme, specific protective markings given, the aspects to which any protective marking applies or otherwise. This may relate to the instructions on safeguarding classified information (e.g. a Security Aspects Letter) as they apply to the procurement as they apply to the procurement process and/or any contracts awarded to you as a result of the procurement process.

USEFUL INFORMATION LINKS

- [Emptoris Training Guide](#)
- [Emptoris e-sourcing tool](#)
- [Contracts Finder](#)
- [Equalities Act introduction](#)
- [Bribery Act introduction](#)
- [Freedom of information Act](#)