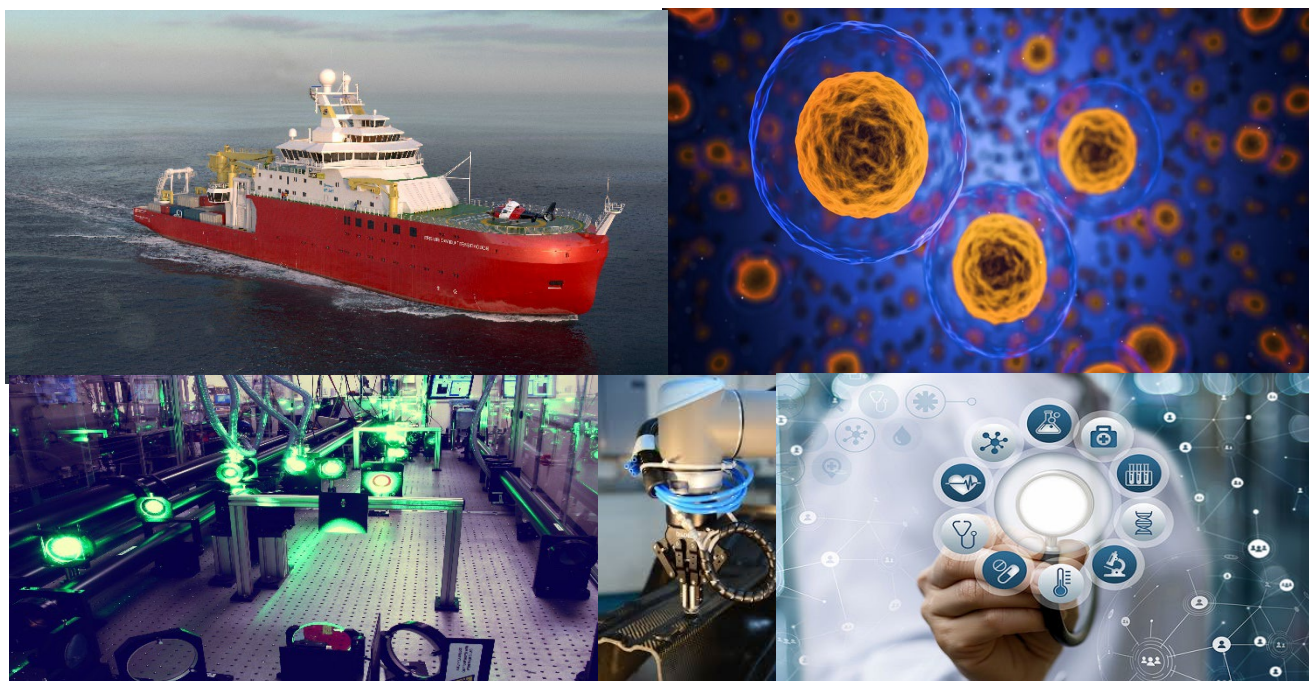




Above Threshold - Invitation to Tender - Revised

Tender Subject: AI Skills Hub

Tender Reference Number: UKRI-3797



Transforming Public Procurement

The Procurement Act 2023 achieved Royal Assent last Autumn. This is an important piece of legislation which will revolutionise the way the public sector buys goods and services, bringing a range of benefits.

As a supplier, or potential supplier, to UKRI you need to know about these changes and our plans to prepare for go-live. Please follow the link below for further information:

[Transforming public procurement: UKRI notice to suppliers – UKRI](#)

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Section 1 – About UK Research and Innovation (UKRI)

<p>1.1</p>	<p>Background</p> <p>UKRI works in partnership with universities, research organisations, businesses, charities, and government to create the best possible environment for research and innovation to flourish. We aim to maximise the contribution of each of our component parts, working individually and collectively. We work with our many partners to benefit everyone through knowledge, talent and ideas.</p> <p>Operating across the whole of the UK with a combined budget of more than £7 billion, UKRI brings together the seven Research Councils, Innovate UK and Research England.</p> <p>The seven Research Councils are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Medical Research Council (MRC) • Science & Technology Facilities Council (STFC) • Engineering & Physical Sciences Research Council (EPSRC) • Natural Environment Research Council (NERC) • Economic & Social Research Council (ESRC) • Biotechnology & Biological Sciences Research Council (BBSRC) • Arts & Humanities Research Council (AHRC) <p>Our mission is to be a trusted partner and to ensure research and innovation continues to flourish in the UK. We will support and help connect the best researchers and innovators with customers, users and the public. We will invest every pound of taxpayers' money wisely in a way that maximises impact for citizens, in the UK and across the world.</p> <p>We will be measured by the impact we deliver, and this will have three elements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will push the frontiers of human knowledge and understanding • We will deliver economic impact and social prosperity • We will create social and cultural impact by supporting our society and others to become enriched, healthier, more resilient and sustainable. <p>We are an independent organisation with a strong voice for research and innovation, both to government and internationally, we are supported and challenged by an independent chair and board. We are principally funded through the Science Budget by the Department for Science, Innovation & Technology (DSIT).</p> <p>For further information about UKRI, please see our website: www.ukri.org</p>
<p>1.2</p>	<p><u>Innovate UK</u></p> <p>As one of the nine bodies of UK Research and Innovation, Innovate UK works with people, companies and partner organisations to find and drive the science and technology innovations that will grow the UK economy. We drive growth by working with companies to de-risk, enable and support innovation.</p> <p>We connect businesses to the partners, customers and investors that can help them turn ideas into commercially successful products and services and business growth.</p>



We fund business and research collaborations to accelerate innovation and drive business investment into research and development.

Our support is available to businesses across all economic sectors, value chains and UK regions.

Since 2007, we have invested around £2.5 billion to help businesses across the country to innovate, with match funding from industry taking the total value of projects above £4.3 billion. We have helped 8,500 organisations create around 70,000 jobs and added an estimated £18 billion of value to the UK economy.

Section 2 – Information About This Procurement

Introduction	
2.1	<p>UKRI wishes to establish a Contract for the provision of AI Skills Hub</p> <p>The site address for delivery of the goods and/or services is:</p> <p>UKRI -Innovate UK.</p> <p>Polaris House, North Star Avenue, Swindon, SN2 1FL</p> <p>The estimated value of the opportunity is:</p> <p>Up to £4,166,666.67 (ex VAT) for the initial period and an optional extension period of 12 months up to £833,333.33 (ex VAT)</p> <p>The full technical specification for this procurement can be found at Appendix A. It is essential that this Appendix is fully read, understood and assessed when considering this opportunity.</p> <p>UKRI is managing this procurement process in accordance with the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 (as may be amended from time to time) (the “Regulations”).</p> <p>UKRI is procuring the Contract for its exclusive use.</p> <p>UKRI shall utilise the e-sourcing portal Delta and all correspondence and submission of documents must be through that portal. Suppliers are to utilise the messaging system within the e-sourcing tool within the timescales detailed in this document.</p> <p>If there is any doubt with regard to the ambiguity of any question or content contained in this questionnaire then Suppliers should raise a clarification question via the e-sourcing portal. Suppliers are to note that any requests for clarifications may not be considered by UKRI if they are not articulated by the Supplier within the discussion forum within the e-sourcing tool and received within the specified time.</p> <p>All Tender Responses MUST be submitted through the portal. Please note, any submission of a Response which is outside of the e-sourcing portal will result in the Response not being considered.</p> <p>The requirements covered by this procurement exercise have not been sub-divided into Lots.</p>

Timescales															
2.2	<p>The following timescales apply to this procurement. UKRI reserves the right to extend the dates and will advise Potential Suppliers of any change to the dates.</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="padding: 5px;">Latest date and time clarification questions from Potential Suppliers shall be received through e-sourcing system</td> <td style="padding: 5px;">5th September 2024 (17.00 BST)</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 5px;">Latest date and time clarification answers should be sent to all Potential Suppliers by the Buyer through e-sourcing system.</td> <td style="padding: 5px;">10th September 2024</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 5px;">The Deadline Closing date and time for all Potential Suppliers to submit their Responses.</td> <td style="padding: 5px;">17th September 2024 11:00 am (BST)</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 5px;"><u>Anticipated</u> notification of proposed Contract Award to successful and unsuccessful Suppliers</td> <td style="padding: 5px;">8th October 2024</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 5px;"><u>Anticipated</u> Standstill Period start date</td> <td style="padding: 5px;">9th October 2024</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 5px;"><u>Anticipated</u> Contract Award Date</td> <td style="padding: 5px;">21st October 2024</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 5px;"><u>Anticipated</u> Commencement of Contract date.</td> <td style="padding: 5px;">24th October 2024</td> </tr> </table> <p>Note – all dates following ‘The Deadline’ are anticipated, and subject to change.</p>	Latest date and time clarification questions from Potential Suppliers shall be received through e-sourcing system	5 th September 2024 (17.00 BST)	Latest date and time clarification answers should be sent to all Potential Suppliers by the Buyer through e-sourcing system.	10 th September 2024	The Deadline Closing date and time for all Potential Suppliers to submit their Responses.	17 th September 2024 11:00 am (BST)	<u>Anticipated</u> notification of proposed Contract Award to successful and unsuccessful Suppliers	8 th October 2024	<u>Anticipated</u> Standstill Period start date	9 th October 2024	<u>Anticipated</u> Contract Award Date	21 st October 2024	<u>Anticipated</u> Commencement of Contract date.	24 th October 2024
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Response Validity															
2.3	Your Response should remain open for consideration for a period of 90 days . A Response valid for a shorter period may be rejected.														
Contract Duration															
2.4	The Contract duration shall be for a period of up to 18 Months with an optional extension of up to 12 months from commencement of the Contract.														
Terms & Conditions															
2.5	<p>Suppliers are to note that any requested modifications to the UKRI Terms and Conditions on the grounds of statutory and legal matters only shall be raised as a formal clarification during the permitted clarification period.</p> <p>Full copy of the Terms and Conditions can be found in Appendix C.</p>														
Responsible Procurement															
2.6	<p>The UKRI Responsible Procurement Charter, can be found:</p> <p>Responsible procurement charter – UKRI</p> <p>The purpose of this Charter is to capture and communicate UKRI’s strategic values, legislative obligations, policy direction and guiding principles across a number of themes which constitute Responsible Procurement.</p> <p>Importantly the Charter articulates how both UKRI and UK government strategy/policy direction align with, and inform UKRI procurement strategies within the scope of Responsible Procurement.</p>														

	<p>The use of the term 'Responsible Procurement' is intended to broaden the scope from using a term such as Sustainable Procurement, to align more with a Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) approach.</p> <p>UKRI takes seriously its obligations, its adherence to standards and commitments, acting as a steward across the following six themes:-</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Environmental Sustainability 2) Health and Safety in Supply Chains 3) Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) 4) Communities 5) Supply Chain Resilience 6) Business Ethics <p>In working with UKRI, Suppliers are expected to be aware of the Charter and to demonstrate their commitments against the key themes where requested.</p>
Evaluation	
2.7	<p>Prior to commencing formal evaluation, Submitted Responses will be checked to ensure they are fully compliant with the pass/fail criteria within the evaluation model. Non-compliant Responses may be rejected by UKRI. Submitted Responses which are deemed by UKRI to be fully compliant will proceed to formal evaluation.</p> <p>The evaluation process will be conducted to ensure that Bids are evaluated fairly to ascertain the Potential Suppliers who can demonstrate the required skills qualities, technical ability and capacity, commercial stability and experience to ensure successful performance of the Contract.</p> <p>The Evaluation Team may comprise staff from UKRI and any specific external stakeholders UKRI deems required.</p> <p>The evaluation of bids shall be based on the Selection and Award criteria defined below and included in the e-sourcing portal by the Evaluation Team.</p> <p>Evaluation Process The evaluation process will feature some, if not all, the following phases</p>
Selection Questionnaire	
2.8	<p>The Selection questionnaire includes the following types of selection pass/fail criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Yes/No Questions Mandatory Questions Information Only Questions Supporting Documentation and Attachments <p>Each question includes a clear definition of the requirements of a successful Response to the question.</p> <p>Questions marked 'for Information Only' do not contribute to the scoring model.</p> <p>Each Mandatory pass/fail question includes a clear definition of the requirements of a successful Response to the question.</p>

During the evaluation stage, the intention is that only Suppliers who pass all the Mandatory and Discretionary Selection Questions of the Invitation to Tender (ITT) Document will be considered for the Award Stage of Evaluation.

There are Three Parts within the Selection Questionnaire which must be completed by all Potential Suppliers who are responding for the work within the e-sourcing tool.

- Part 1 - Supplier Information
- Part 2 - Exclusion Grounds
- Part 3 - Further Selection Questions

Disqualification

In the event of a Supplier failing to meet the requirements of any of the mandatory pass/fail questions, UKRI reserves the right to disqualify the Supplier and not consider the evaluation of the rest of the Supplier’s Response.

Part 1 – Supplier Information

Question	Question subject
Question 1.1	Supplier Information
Question 1.2	Supplier Trading Status
Question 1.3	Supplier DUNS and VAT Information
Question 1.4	Supplier Registration Information
Question 1.5	Authorisation to Respond
Question 1.6	Additional Trading Names
Question 1.7	Classifications
Question 1.8	SME Confirmation
Question 1.9	Persons of Significant Control
Question 1.10 a	Immediate Parent Company Details
Question 1.10 b	Ultimate Parent Company Details
Question 1.11	Economic Operators
Question 1.12a	Legal Structure of Economic Operators
Question 1.12b	Economic Operators use of Subcontractors
Question 1.13	Declaration

Part 2 – Exclusions Grounds

Question 2.1	Regulation 57 (1) and (2) Participation in a Criminal Organisation
Question 2.2	Regulation 57 (3) Payment of tax or social security
Question 2.3	Regulation 57(8) Breach of Environmental Regulations
Question 2.4	Enforcement/Remedial Orders/Complaints
Question 2.5	Sub-Contractor Checking
Question 2.6	Sub-Contractor Enforcement/ Remedial Orders/Complaints

<u>Part 3 – Further Selection Questions</u>	
Question 3.1	Economic and Financial Standing
Question 3.3	Wider Groups
Question 3.4	Technical and Professional Ability/References
Question 3.5	Lack of Experience/References
Question 3.6	Management of Supply Chains with Sub-Contractors
Question 3.7	Compliance under Modern Slavery Act 2015
Question 3.8	Annual Reporting contained within Section 54 of the Act 2015
Question 3.9	Insurance Levels
Question 3.12	Cyber Essentials
Question 3.13	Data Storage
Question 3.14	Health and Safety Policy
Question 3.15	ISO27001 and ISO27017 Certification
Question 3.16	Information Security
Award Questionnaire	
2.9	<p>Award Questions shall be marked against the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mandatory or Discretionary pass/fail criteria. • Award Scoring methodology and criteria stated in this section of the document. <p>Each Mandatory pass / fail question includes a clear definition of the requirements of a successful Response to the question.</p> <p>The evaluation model in this document will be determined to two decimal places.</p> <p>Questions marked 'for information only' do not contribute to the scoring model.</p> <p>There are three parts within the Award Questionnaire which must be completed by all Potential Suppliers who are responding for the work within the e-sourcing tool.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Part 4 - Commercial • Part 5 - Pricing • Part 6 - Technical and Quality <p>Disqualification</p> <p>In the event of a Supplier failing to meet the requirements of any of the Award Questionnaire mandatory pass/fail criteria, UKRI reserves the right to disqualify the Supplier and not consider their response further.</p> <p>Pricing Elements</p>

Suppliers must take care to ensure they provide a price for each item/element of the pricing schedule as specified in **Appendix B**. Failure to complete the pricing schedule in full may result in the Tender Response being rejected. If there are any additional costs not detailed in the Price Schedule which Potential Suppliers would like to include, please declare them in the “Other Costs” table outlined within the Price Schedule. UKRI reserves the right to refuse to pay for any costs not detailed in this schedule.

Do not make any unnecessary changes to the pricing schedule.

Price will be scored on the following methodology:

UKRI will compare the total costs provided.

A Supplier’s score will be based on the lowest total cost received divided by their total cost, multiplied by the maximum marks available.

E.g. If the total price for three tender responses are received and Tenderer A has quoted £50K as their total price, Tenderer B has quoted £70K and Tenderer C has quoted £100K then the calculation will be as follows: (Maximum marks available in this example being 30)

Tenderer A Score = $50000/50000 \times 30 = 30$

Tenderer B Score = $50000/80000 \times 30 = 18.75$

Tenderer C Score = $50000/100000 \times 30 = 15$

Award (Non-Pricing Elements) Questions

Each question will be judged on a score from 0 to 5, which shall be subjected to a multiplier to reflect the question weighting.

E.g. Where the question weighting is 20%, then the 0-5 score achieved will be divided by 5 (the maximum score available) and multiplied by 20.

If a Supplier scores 4 from the available 5 points, this will equate to 16% by using the following calculation:

Score = $4/5 \times 20 = 16\%$

Suppliers are to be aware that there may be multiple evaluators, in which individual scores will determine the final score that will be agreed by consensus.

The 0 to 5 score shall be based on the agreed General Scoring Mechanism (GSM) below (unless otherwise stated within the question):

Score	Methodology
5	Indicates an exceptional Response which clearly demonstrates that the supplier has fully met the requirements stated within the Tender documentation with significant advantages. The Supplier has included a full and detailed description of their current techniques, measurements and services in their Response.

4	Indicates that the Response is good and confirms that the supplier has met the requirements in the Tender documentation with some advantages over that of an acceptable Response. The Supplier has included a description of their current techniques, measurements and services in their Response.
3	Indicates an acceptable Response and that the company has met the requirement with no reservations. However, the Response could be expanded upon in more detail and more information could have been provided regarding the Suppliers services and techniques.
2	Indicates that the Response has partially met the requirements with some reservations. There is some useful information provided and could be expanded upon to make it an acceptable Response.
1	Indicates that the Response has failed to meet an acceptable standard, with serious reservations as to whether the supplier can meet the requirements stated in the Tender documentation. The Supplier has misunderstood the question and the Response would require major revision in order to make it acceptable.
0	An extremely poor and unacceptable Response which indicates that the requirements cannot be met. There was no information provided and/or the requirements stated in the Tender documentation have not been addressed.

Suppliers are to be aware that there may be multiple evaluators

Award Questionnaire – Pass/Fail Criteria

Questionnaire	Q No.	Question subject
Commercial	4.1	Form of Response
Commercial	4.2	Certificate of bona fide Response
Commercial	4.3	Compliance to the Contract Terms
Technical/Quality	6.1	Compliance to the Specification

Award Questionnaire – Scoring Criteria

Questionnaire	Q No.	Question subject	Question Weighting
Price	5.1	Price	15%
Technical/Quality	6.2a	Approach and Methodology - Delivery	15%
Technical/Quality	6.2b	Approach and Methodology - Outputs	10%
Technical/Quality	6.3a	Understanding of the Project and the Skills Ecosystem - Environment	10%
Technical/Quality	6.3b	Understanding of the Project and Skills Ecosystem – Implementation	5%
Technical/Quality	6.3c	Understanding of the Project and Skills	5%

			Ecosystem – Impact assessment	
	Technical/Quality	6.4	Project plan and management	10%
	Technical/Quality	6.5	Assessment & Management of Risk	10%
	Technical/Quality	6.6	Team composition and capability to deliver	10%
	Technical/Quality	6.7	Social Value Model Commitment	10%

Section 3 – Conditions of Tendering

Introduction	
3.1	<p>UKRI's logo, trademarks and other identifying marks are proprietary and may not be incorporated in the Suppliers Response without written permission from UKRI.</p> <p>The Supplier shall indemnify and keep indemnified UKRI against all actions, claims, demands, proceedings, damages, costs, losses, charges and expenses whatsoever in respect of any breach by the Supplier of this document.</p> <p>It remains the responsibility of the Supplier to keep UKRI informed of any matter that may affect continued qualification.</p> <p>Whilst it is UKRI's intention to purchase the majority of its requirements under this Contract Arrangement from the Supplier(s) appointed this does not confer any exclusivity on the appointed Suppliers. UKRI reserve the right to purchase any requirements (including those similar to this and covered by this procurement) from any Supplier outside of this Contract.</p> <p>Suppliers are to read the ITT Documents, Appendices, Clarification Messages and the Evaluation Methodologies carefully before completing the Response submission. Failure to comply with any of these instructions for completion and submission of the Submitted Response may result in the rejection of the Response. Suppliers are advised therefore to acquaint themselves fully with the extent and nature of the requirements and contractual obligations. These instructions constitute the Conditions of Response. Participation in this procurement process automatically signals that the Supplier accepts these Conditions.</p> <p>All material issued in connection with this ITT shall remain the property of UKRI and shall be used only for the purpose of this procurement. All Due Diligence Information shall be either returned to UKRI or securely destroyed by the Supplier (at UKRI's option) at the conclusion of the procurement.</p> <p>The Supplier shall ensure that each and every sub-contractor, consortium member and adviser abide by the terms of these instructions and the Conditions of Response.</p>

	<p>UKRI shall not be committed to any course of action as a result of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Issuing this ITT or any invitation to participate in this procurement; • an invitation to submit any Response in respect of this procurement; • communicating with a Supplier or Supplier’s representatives or agents in respect of this procurement; or • any other communication between UKRI and any other party. <p>Suppliers shall accept and acknowledge that by issuing this ITT UKRI shall not be bound to accept any Response and reserves the right not to conclude a Contract for some or all of the requirements for which Responses are invited.</p> <p>Suppliers should not include in the Response any extraneous information which has not been specifically requested in the ITT including, for example, any sales literature, standard terms of trading etc. Any such information not requested but provided by the Supplier shall not be considered by UKRI.</p> <p>If the Supplier is a consortium, the following information must be provided:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • full details of the consortium; and the information sought in this ITT in respect of each of the consortium’s constituent members as part of a single composite Response. • Potential Suppliers should provide details of the actual or proposed percentage shareholding of the constituent members within the consortium as indicated in the relevant section of the selection questionnaire SEL1.10 specifically refers. • If a consortium is not proposing to form a corporate entity, full details of alternative proposed arrangements should be provided as indicated in the relevant section of the ITT. However, please note UKRI reserves the right to require a successful consortium to form a single legal entity in accordance with regulation 19(6) of the Regulations. UKRI recognises that arrangements in relation to consortia may (within limits) be subject to future change. • Potential Suppliers should therefore respond in the light of the arrangements as currently envisaged. • Potential Suppliers are reminded that any future proposed change in relation to consortia must be notified to UKRI so that it can make a further assessment by applying the selection criteria to the new information provided and consider rejection of the Response if UKRI reasonably consider the change to have a material impact of the delivery of the viability of the Response.
Confidentiality	
3.2	<p>Subject to the exceptions referred to in the next paragraph, the contents of this ITT are being made available by UKRI on condition that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Suppliers shall at all times treat the contents of the ITT and any related documents (together called the ‘Information’) as confidential, save in so far as they are already in the public domain; • Suppliers shall not disclose, copy, reproduce, distribute or pass any of the Information to any other person at any time or allow any of these things to happen;

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Suppliers shall not use any of the Information for any purpose other than for the purposes of submitting (or deciding whether to submit) a Response; and • Suppliers shall not undertake any publicity activity within any section of the media in relation to this procurement <p>Suppliers may disclose, distribute or pass any of the Information to the Supplier's advisers, sub-contractors or to another person provided that either:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is done for the sole purpose of enabling a Response to be submitted and the person receiving the Information undertakes in writing to keep the Information confidential on the same terms as if that person were the Supplier; or • The disclosure is made for the sole purpose of obtaining legal advice from external lawyers in relation to the procurement or to any Contract arising from it; or • The Supplier is legally required to make such a disclosure <p>In paragraphs above the term 'person' includes but is not limited to any person, firm, body or association, corporate or incorporate.</p> <p>UKRI may disclose detailed information relating to Responses to its employees, agents or advisers and they may make any of the Contract documents available for private inspection by its officers, employees, agents or advisers. UKRI also reserve the right to disseminate information that is materially relevant to the procurement to all Suppliers, even if the information has only been requested by one Supplier, subject to the duty to protect each Supplier's commercial confidentiality in relation to its Response (unless there is a requirement for disclosure).</p> <p>As a Non-Departmental Public Body, UKRI is subject to control and reporting within Government. 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. UKRI report to the Cabinet Office and HM Treasury for all expenditure.</p> <p>For these purposes, UKRI may disclose within Government any of the Suppliers documentation/information (including any that the Supplier considers to be confidential and/or commercially sensitive such as specific Response information) submitted by the Supplier to UKRI during this Procurement. Subject to FOIA, the information will not be disclosed outside Government. Suppliers taking part in this ITT consent to these terms as part of the competition process.</p> <p>The Government introduced its Government Security Classifications ("GSC") classification scheme to replace the Government Protective Marking System ("GPMS") in 2014. A key aspect of this is the reduction in the number of security classifications used. All Suppliers are encouraged to make themselves aware of the GSC and identify any potential impacts in their Response, 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 GSC. The link below to the Gov.uk website provides information on the GSC:</p>
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	<p>https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/government-security-classifications</p> <p>UKRI reserves the right to amend any security related term or condition of the draft contract accompanying this ITT to reflect any changes introduced by the GSC.</p>
Preparation of a Response	
<p>3.3</p>	<p>Suppliers must obtain for themselves at their own responsibility and expense all information necessary for the preparation of Responses. Suppliers are solely responsible for all costs, expenses and other liabilities arising in connection with the preparation and submission of their Response and all other stages of the selection and evaluation process. Under no circumstances will UKRI be liable for any such costs, expenses or liabilities borne by Suppliers or their sub-contractors, suppliers or advisers in this process.</p> <p>UKRI relies on Suppliers' own analysis and review of information provided. Consequently, Suppliers are solely responsible for obtaining the information which they consider is necessary in order to make decisions regarding the content of their Responses and to undertake any investigations they consider necessary in order to verify any information provided to them during the procurement.</p> <p>Suppliers must form their own opinions, making such investigations and taking such advice (including professional advice) as is appropriate, regarding their Responses, without reliance upon any opinion or other information provided by UKRI or its advisers and representatives. Suppliers should notify UKRI promptly of any perceived ambiguity, inconsistency or omission in this ITT, any of its associated documents and/or any other information issued to them during the procurement.</p> <p>Suppliers must ensure that each Response to a question is within any specified word count. Any Responses with words in excess of the word count will only be considered up to the point where they meet the word count, any additional words beyond the volume defined in the word count will not be considered by the evaluation panel.</p> <p>Suppliers must ensure that each Response to a question is not cross referenced to a Response to another question. In the event of a Supplier adding a cross reference it will not be considered in evaluation. (However, where a response to a question is dependent or aligned to another response, then Suppliers are requested to make clear reference to this – add wording if necessary)</p>
Submission of Responses	
<p>3.4</p>	<p>The Response must be submitted as instructed in this document through the e-sourcing tool. Failure to follow the instruction within each Section of this document, to omit Responses to any of the questions or to present your Response in alignment with any guidance notes provided may render the Response non-compliant and it may be rejected.</p>

	<p>All tender Responses MUST be submitted through the portal. Please note, any submission of a bid which is outside of the e-sourcing portal will result in the Response not being considered.</p> <p>UKRI may at its own absolute discretion extend the closing date and the time for receipt of Responses specified in Section 2.</p> <p>Any extension to the ITT Response period will apply to all Suppliers.</p> <p>Any financial data provided must be submitted in or converted into pounds sterling. Where official documents include financial data in a foreign currency, a sterling equivalent must be provided. Failure to adhere to this requirement will result in the Response not being considered.</p> <p>The Response and any documents accompanying it must be in the English language.</p> <p>Responses may be submitted any time up to the date indicated in Section 2. Responses received before this deadline will be retained in a secure environment, unopened until this deadline has passed.</p> <p>Responses received after the date indicated in Section 2 shall not be considered by UKRI, unless the Supplier can justify that the reason for the delay is solely attributable to UKRI. Any request for a late Response to be considered must be sent through the Delta Message Centre in advance of 'the deadline' if a Supplier believes their Response will be received late. UKRI reserves the right to accept or reject any late Response without justification to the affected Supplier and make no guarantee it will consider any request for a late Response to be considered.</p>
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Canvassing and Collusive Behaviour

<p>3.5</p>	<p>Any Supplier who directly or indirectly canvasses any employee, of UKRI or its members or any of its employees concerning the establishment of the Contract or who directly or indirectly obtains or attempts to obtain information from any such officer, member, employee or agent or concerning any other Supplier, Response or proposed Response will be disqualified.</p> <p>Any Supplier who:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • fixes or adjusts the amount of its Response by or in accordance with any agreement or arrangement with any other party; or • communicates to any party other than UKRI, as applicable, relevant employees the amount or approximate amount of its proposed Response or information which would enable the amount or approximate amount to be calculated (except where such disclosure is made in confidence in order to obtain quotations necessary for the preparation of the Response or insurance or any necessary security); or • enters into any agreement or arrangement with any other party that such other party shall refrain from submitting a Response; or • enters into any agreement or arrangement with any other party as to the amount of any Response submitted; or
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> offers or agrees to pay or give or does pay or give any sum or sums of money, inducement or valuable consideration directly or indirectly to any party for doing or having done or causing or having caused to be done in relation to any other Response or proposed Response, any act or omission, <p>shall (without prejudice to any other civil remedies available to UKRI and without prejudice to any criminal liability which such conduct by a Supplier may attract) be disqualified.</p>
No Inducement or Incentive	
3.6	The ITT is issued on the basis that nothing contained in it shall constitute an inducement or incentive nor shall have in any other way persuaded a Supplier to submit a Response or enter into the Contract or any other contractual agreement.
Acceptance of the Contract	
3.7	The Supplier in submitting the Response undertakes that in the event of the Response being accepted by UKRI and UKRI confirming in writing such acceptance to the Supplier, the Supplier will within 7 days of being called upon to do so by UKRI execute the Contract in the form set out in the Contract Terms or in such amended form as may subsequently be agreed.
Response Request for Clarification	
3.8	<p>All requests for clarification about the requirements or the process of this procurement shall be made through the e-sourcing tool unless where the e-sourcing tool is unavailable due to system maintenance or failure, then other arrangements shall be made and advised.</p> <p>UKRI will endeavour to answer all questions as quickly as possible but cannot guarantee a minimum response time.</p> <p>No further requests for clarifications will be accepted after the date set out in Section 2.2 Timescales.</p> <p>In order to ensure equality of treatment of Suppliers, UKRI intends to publish the questions and clarifications raised by Suppliers together with UKRI's responses (but not the source of the questions) to all participants on a regular basis.</p> <p>Suppliers should indicate if a query is of a commercially sensitive nature – where disclosure of such query and the answer would or would be likely to prejudice its commercial interests. However, UKRI at its sole discretion does not either; consider the query to be of a commercially confidential nature or one which all Suppliers would potentially benefit from seeing both the query and the UKRI's response, UKRI will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> invite the Supplier submitting the query to either declassify the query and allow the query along with UKRI's response to be circulated to all Suppliers; or request the Supplier, if it still considers the query to be of a commercially confidential nature, to withdraw the query prior to the end of the closing date and time for Supplier clarifications. <p>UKRI reserves the right to advise that there will not be a response request for clarification or to circulate such a request where it considers that the answer</p>

	to that request would or would be likely to prejudice its commercial interests.
Amendments to Response Documents	
3.9	At any time prior to the deadline for the receipt of Responses, UKRI reserves the right to amend, add to or withdraw all or any part of this ITT. Any such amendment will be numbered and dated and issued by UKRI to all prospective Suppliers. In order to give prospective Suppliers reasonable time in which to take the amendment into account in preparing their Responses, UKRI may, at its discretion, extend the time and/or date for receipt of Responses.
Modification and Withdrawal	
3.10	Suppliers may modify their Response where allowable within the e-sourcing tool. No Response may be modified after the deadline for submission of Responses. Suppliers may withdraw their Response at any time prior the deadline for submission of Responses (or any other time prior to accepting the offer of a Contract). The notice to withdraw the Response must be in sent via the e-sourcing portal.
Right to Disqualify or Reject	
3.11	UKRI reserves the right to reject or disqualify a Supplier where: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the Supplier fails to comply fully with the requirements of this Request for Proposal or presents the Response in a format contrary to the requirements of this document; and/or the Supplier is guilty of serious misrepresentation in relation to its Response; expression of interest; or the Response process; and/or there is a change in identity, control, financial standing or other factor impacting on the selection and/or evaluation process affecting the Supplier.
Right to Cancel, Clarify or Vary the Process	
3.12	UKRI reserves the right to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> cancel the evaluation process at any stage; and/or require the Supplier to clarify its Response in writing and/or provide additional information. (Failure to respond adequately may result in the Supplier not being selected),
Notification of Award	
3.13	UKRI will notify the successful Supplier of the Contract award in writing and will publish an Award Notice in the Official Journal of the European Union and Contracts Finder in accordance with the Regulations within 30 days of the award of the contract. As required by the Regulations all successful and unsuccessful Suppliers will be provided with an email advising the outcome of the submission of their ITT Response.
Useful Information Links	
3.14	Contracts Finder Find high value contracts in the public sector - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk) Equalities Act introduction Bribery Act introduction Freedom of information Act Find a Tender

Section 4 – Glossary

TERM	MEANING
“Buyer”	An authorised officer of UKRI, commonly a member of the UKRI Procurement team who is responsible for the procurement process
“Conditions of Response”	These instructions constitute the Conditions of Response: Suppliers are to read the ITT Documents, Appendices, Clarification Messages and the Evaluation Methodologies carefully before completing the Response submission. Suppliers are advised to acquaint themselves fully with the extent and nature of the requirements and contractual obligations. Participation in this procurement process automatically signals that the Supplier accepts these Conditions.
“Conditions of Tendering”	means the terms and conditions set out in this ITT relating to the submission of a Tender Response
“Contract”	means the agreement to be entered by UKRI and the Supplier following any award under the procurement
“Contracting Bodies”	means the Authority and any other contracting authorities described in the FTS Contract Notice
“Authority”	A public body regulated under the Public Contracts Regulations on whose behalf the procurement is being run
“Due Diligence Information”	means the background and supporting documents and information provided by the Authority for the purpose of better informing the Suppliers Responses to this Invitation
"EIR"	mean the Environmental Information Regulations 2004 together with any guidance and/or codes of practice issued by the Information Commissioner or relevant Government department in relation to such regulations
“FOIA”	means the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and any subordinate legislation made under such Act from time to time together with any guidance and/or codes of practice issued by the Information Commissioner or relevant Government department in relation to such legislation
“FTS Contract Notice”	means the advertisement issued in Find a Tender, the UK e-notification service.
“GSM”	General Scoring Mechanism: The scoring regime used for assessing and awarding points for any qualitative submission elements of the Response.
"Information"	Invitation to Tender and any related documents (together called the ‘Information’)
“Lot”	means a discrete sub-division of the requirements
“Mandatory”	Means a pass / fail criteria which must be met in order for a Response to be considered, unless otherwise specified.
“ITT”	means this Invitation to Tender documentation and all related documents published by the Authority and made



	available to Suppliers and includes the Due Diligence Information.
“Response”, “Submitted Bid/Response”, “Tender Response” or “ITT Response”	means the Supplier’s formal offer in Response to this Invitation to Tender
“Supplier(s)”	means the organisations being invited to respond to this Invitation to Tender
“Supplies/Services/Works”	means any supplies/services and supplies or works set out at within the specification.
“UKRI”	Means UK Research and Innovation, hereby known as UKRI