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Planning

Specialist Technical and Commercial Advisory for Rail and Other Transport Systems Framework (STARFour)

Department for Transport

UK2: Preliminary market engagement notice - Procurement Act 2023 - [view information about notice types](#)

Notice identifier: 2026/S 000-001922

Procurement identifier (OCID): ocds-h6vhtk-05fd57 ([view related notices](#))

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Scope

Reference

FOUR0000

Description

In line with its commitment to increasing investment in the UK's transport infrastructure, the Department for Transport (DfT) requires ongoing access to high-quality, specialist technical and commercial advisory services. This need is currently fulfilled through the STARThree Framework, which succeeded the Specialist Technical Advisory for Rail (STARTwo) Framework—both managed by the Department's Group Commercial Directorate (GCD).

The Department for Transport intends to publish the STARFour Framework, a fourth generation, closed, multi-lot framework agreement to succeed the STARThree Framework (expiring July 2027). However, this will be subject to approvals and market engagement feedback.

STARFour will provide continued access to specialist technical and commercial advisory services across all transport sectors, supporting the Department, its ALBs, and other qualifying bodies. Building on the success of STARThree, the new framework will encourage SME participation, promote innovation, and deliver value for money through streamlined procurement routes including mini-competitions and direct awards.

The STARFour Framework is essential to maintain a fit-for-purpose, flexible, and cost-effective route for specialist transport technical and commercial advice following the expiry of STARThree. As transport challenges grow—across net zero strategies, decarbonisation, multi-modal integration, and industry restructuring—STARFour will ensure DfT, ALBs and qualifying bodies have continued access to critical expertise across all transport sectors, not just rail.

Commercial tool

Establishes a framework

Total value (estimated)

- £350,000,000 excluding VAT
- £420,000,000 including VAT

Above the relevant threshold

Contract dates (estimated)

- 31 July 2027 to 30 July 2030
- Possible extension to 30 July 2031
- 4 years

Main procurement category

Services

CPV classifications

- 71241000 - Feasibility study, advisory service, analysis
- 71311000 - Civil engineering consultancy services
- 71311200 - Transport systems consultancy services
- 71311300 - Infrastructure works consultancy services
- 71313410 - Risk or hazard assessment for construction
- 71313420 - Environmental standards for construction
- 71313440 - Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) services for construction
- 71313430 - Environmental indicators analysis for construction
- 71313450 - Environmental monitoring for construction
- 72240000 - Systems analysis and programming services
- 73210000 - Research consultancy services
- 73220000 - Development consultancy services
- 73300000 - Design and execution of research and development
- 79311100 - Survey design services
- 79311300 - Survey analysis services
- 79311410 - Economic impact assessment
- 79312000 - Market-testing services
- 79313000 - Performance review services
- 79314000 - Feasibility study
- 79315000 - Social research services

- 79411100 - Business development consultancy services
- 79412000 - Financial management consultancy services
- 79413000 - Marketing management consultancy services
- 79417000 - Safety consultancy services
- 79418000 - Procurement consultancy services
- 79419000 - Evaluation consultancy services
- 79421100 - Project-supervision services other than for construction work
- 79421200 - Project-design services other than for construction work
- 71311230 - Railway engineering services
- 71244000 - Calculation of costs, monitoring of costs
- 71242000 - Project and design preparation, estimation of costs

Contract locations

- UK - United Kingdom

Engagement

Engagement deadline

28 January 2026

Engagement process description

The Department for Transport is launching preliminary market engagement for the STARFour Framework. Alongside this notice, we have shared the proposed STARFour

Category Chart and Category List for your review.

A short video briefing has also been prepared, providing background on the STARFour Framework and outlining its scope and objectives. This can be accessed using this link: <https://tinyurl.com/STARFourFramework>

We are keen to gather views on the proposed scope and overall structure of STARFour and welcome your feedback to help shape our approach. Please share your views by completing the survey using the following link:

<https://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/FOUR0000MarketSoundingQuestionnaire/>

We kindly ask that responses are submitted no later than 5pm on Wednesday 28 January 2026.

In order to access the proposed STARFour Category Chart and Category List, please use the Jaggaer online portal using the following link:

<https://dft.app.jaggaer.com/go/77730479019BA2F83148>

If you are not already registered on the Department for Transport's e-sourcing platform Jaggaer, you can register via the following link: <https://dft.app.jaggaer.com/>

Thank you for your engagement. We look forward to receiving your feedback.

Participation

Particular suitability

Small and medium-sized enterprises (SME)

Submission

Publication date of tender notice (estimated)

8 May 2026

Contracting authority

Department for Transport

- Public Procurement Organisation Number: PLTC-5358-LTWZ

Great Minster House, 33 Horseferry Road

London

SW1P 4DR

United Kingdom

Email: STAR3-Framework@dft.gov.uk

Region: UKI32 - Westminster

Organisation type: Public authority - central government