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Awarded contract

178,651.90

Ministry of Defence

F15: Voluntary ex ante transparency notice

Notice reference: 2023/S 000-003404

Published: 3 February 2023, 12:10pm

Section I: Contracting authority/entity

I.1) Name and addresses

Ministry of Defence

DSTL Porton Down

SALISBURY

SP4 0JQ

Email

cbrcommercial@dstl.gov.uk

Country

United Kingdom

NUTS code

UKK - South West (England)

Internet address(es)

Main address

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/defence-science-and-technology-laboratory>

I.4) Type of the contracting authority

Ministry or any other national or federal authority

I.5) Main activity

Defence

Section II: Object

II.1) Scope of the procurement

II.1.1) Title

178,651.90

II.1.2) Main CPV code

- 38510000 - Microscopes

II.1.3) Type of contract

Supplies

II.1.4) Short description

Supply of Agilent Cytation automated digital fluorescence/luminescence upright and inverted microscope with incubator and robot arm

II.1.6) Information about lots

This contract is divided into lots: No

II.1.7) Total value of the procurement (excluding VAT)

Lowest offer: £178,651.90 / Highest offer: £178,651.90 taken into consideration

II.2) Description

II.2.2) Additional CPV code(s)

- 38510000 - Microscopes

II.2.3) Place of performance

NUTS codes

- UKK - South West (England)

Main site or place of performance

SALISBURY

II.2.4) Description of the procurement

Supply of Agilent Cytation automated digital fluorescence/luminescence upright and inverted microscope with incubator and robot arm

II.2.5) Award criteria

Price

II.2.11) Information about options

Options: No

II.2.13) Information about European Union Funds

The procurement is related to a project and/or programme financed by European Union funds: No

Section IV. Procedure

IV.1) Description

IV.1.1) Type of procedure

Award of a contract without prior publication of a call for competition in the cases listed below

- The contract has its object services listed in Annex II B

Explanation:

Negotiated Procedure without Prior Publication subject to Negotiated Procedure without Prior Publication for

Technical Reasons under PCR, Regulation 32(5)(b)

The reasons can be broken down into four areas:

Complexity

All manufacturers have proprietary software to run their machines and analyse resultant images. It is necessary that the intended new system use the same management and image analysis software as our extant system.

This type of equipment is intended to provide high quality images of complex microscopic items and undertake complex image analysis to extract quantitative information. Human interpretation of the image is subjective, and the image analysis software is required to remove subjectivity. The management software components (different from the image analysis components) are required to automate the system to take images without the operator present, including images of the same exact microscopic location in a sample dish and locating the correct plane in which to focus to provide sequential images for the analysis software components.

All components of the software are complex and require both specialist training (2-3 days) to familiarise, and frequent use (on at least a weekly basis) to reinforce, develop and maintain expertise. It is imperative for this reason that the new system be compatible with the existing system, to ensure that users do not have to learn and maintain expertise across two systems. The new system will be placed in a different biological containment environment to the extant system. This provides a further challenge for maintaining expertise across two different systems, as specialist users do not spend equal amounts of time in the two environments.

Scientific rigour

Dstl already operates an Agilent Cytation microscope running Agilent's proprietary Gen5 software. Multiple fluorescent signals are stimulated with specific wavelength light sources and detected with specific wavelength light sensors that are built into the system. Experiments at Dstl are designed specifically for these stimulation and detection optics, making and using cell lines and reagents that match the specifications of the system. A different system will have different specifications. Where these are similar to those of Agilent, they are likely to be slightly different in terms of wavelengths for stimulation and detection. This will mean a system from a different manufacturer may give a different result. Where the margins between samples are fine, small differences in image data resulting from differences in stimulation and detection optics have the potential to combine with different analysis software to confound the experiments. As the two systems are required to give consistency of data across different biological containment environments, it is a requirement they use the same fluorescence stimulator and detection optics.

Redundancy

The stimulation and detection optics for fluorescence microscopy are user-removable components of the Agilent system. This means that if an optical component in one machine fails, it can be replaced by the user, with a component from the sister machine. This is a significant advantage to Dstl, where experiments in high containment environments are expensive and are often undertaken on a tight schedule. The ability to rapidly (i.e. same day) replace an optical component in a high containment environment with an identical component from a sister machine in the low containment environment will be a significant advantage.

IV.1.8) Information about the Government Procurement Agreement (GPA)

The procurement is covered by the Government Procurement Agreement: No

Section V. Award of contract/concession

Contract No

RQ0000022553

Title

Supply of Agilent Cytation automated digital fluorescence/luminescence upright and inverted microscope with incubator and robot arm

A contract/lot is awarded: Yes

V.2) Award of contract/concession

V.2.1) Date of conclusion of the contract

3 February 2023

V.2.2) Information about tenders

The contract has been awarded to a group of economic operators: No

V.2.3) Name and address of the contractor/concessionaire

Agilent Technologies LDA UK Limited

Lakeside 5500, Cheadle Royal Business Park

CHEADLE

SK8 3GR

Country

United Kingdom

NUTS code

- UKD - North West (England)

The contractor/concessionaire is an SME

No

V.2.4) Information on value of contract/lot/concession (excluding VAT)

Total value of the contract/lot/concession: £178,651.90

V.2.5) Information about subcontracting

The contract/lot/concession is likely to be subcontracted

Section VI. Complementary information

VI.4) Procedures for review

VI.4.1) Review body

DSTL Porton Down

SALISBURY

SP4 0JQ

Country

United Kingdom