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Tender

Water Quality Research and Catchment Planning in the River Wye.

DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

UK4: Tender notice - Procurement Act 2023 - [view information about notice types](#)

Notice identifier: 2026/S 000-003483

Procurement identifier (OCID): ocds-h6vhtk-0606a0

Published 15 January 2026, 12:58pm

Scope

Reference

C32695

Description

This opportunity is an Open Procedure advertised by Defra group Commercial on behalf of Defra.

The Wye catchment covers two nations, and five counties, and contains a complex mix of land use, including agriculture, urban areas, and a wealth of protected sites. With this varied geography comes a complex stakeholder landscape, combining a range of values and interests. This also brings a range of pressures on the water environment of the catchment.

Defra and the Welsh Government are seeking to deliver a research project to investigate sources of pollution and pressures affecting the Wye and develop and test ways to improve land management for water quality using a 'living-labs' approach to test solutions with local stakeholders. Additionally, the project will identify best practice

approaches to undertaking research involving complex stakeholder groups.

The aims of the research programme are to build on existing evidence and work alongside stakeholders to:

- Investigate the sources of the pollution and pressures affecting the river, in particular focussing on agricultural pollution
- Study the impacts of changing farming practices and land management in the catchment
- Develop and test new ways to improve land management to improve water quality, which are suitable for the Wye catchment and will also be transferable to other catchments, using a 'living-labs' approach to test solutions
- Examine what's driving wildlife decline and water flow – the movement and quantity of water which is crucial for habitats and species
- Understand best practice for undertaking research involving a complex stakeholder group.

This strategy aligns with other foundational initiatives such as the Environmental Improvement Plan and the Land Use Framework. For further information please visit Environmental Improvement Plan (EIP) 2025 - GOV.UK

Total value (estimated)

- £1,000,000 excluding VAT
- £1,200,000 including VAT

Above the relevant threshold

Contract dates (estimated)

- 16 March 2026 to 17 April 2029
- Possible extension to 18 October 2029

- 3 years, 7 months, 3 days

Description of possible extension:

There is an option of a 6-month extension to the project due to unforeseen circumstances.

Main procurement category

Services

CPV classifications

- 73110000 - Research services

Contract locations

- UK - United Kingdom

Participation

Legal and financial capacity conditions of participation

1. Bidder Pack- Part One Core Requirements above threshold PA 2023
2. Bidder Pack - Part 2_Procurement Specific Requirements above threshold PA 23
3. Tender Specification

Particular suitability

- Small and medium-sized enterprises (SME)
 - Voluntary, community and social enterprises (VCSE)
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Submission

Enquiry deadline

4 February 2026, 12:00pm

Tender submission deadline

18 February 2026, 12:00pm

Submission address and any special instructions

<https://atamis-9529.my.site.com/s/Welcome>

Tenders may be submitted electronically

Yes

Languages that may be used for submission

English

Award decision date (estimated)

12 March 2026

Award criteria

Name	Description	Type	Weighting
Technical	E01 Approach and methodology 35% E02 Project management (including project plan) 30% E03 Proposed staff and contractor/sub-contractor expertise 25% E04 Risk 10%	Quality	60.00%
Price	Weighting to be evaluated will be 30% of 100%	Cost	30.00%
Social Value	SV01 Sustainability Weighting to be awarded will be 10% of 100%	Quality	10.00%

Other information

Conflicts assessment prepared/revised

Yes

Procedure

Procedure type

Open procedure

Special regime

Concession

Justification for not publishing a preliminary market engagement notice

To ensure that the project's objectives would be met, and to confirm the market appetite, a UK2: Preliminary market engagement notice was published on 10 December 2025, @4:02pm whilst a supplier event was conducted on 17th December 2025. The turnaround was amazing with 22 suppliers in attendance. There's a glitch with the system.

This project is Research and Development under Paragraph 22 of the Procurement Act.

<https://atamis-9529.my.salesforce.com/a2ZTu000003GprGMAS/p>

Contracting authority

DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

- Public Procurement Organisation Number: PNBD-3289-CDGX

Seacole Building, 2 Marsham Street

London

SW1P 4DF

United Kingdom

Contact name: DGC

Telephone: 03459335577

Email: procurement@defra.gov.uk

Website: <https://defra-family.force.com/s/Welcome>

Region: UKI32 - Westminster

Organisation type: Public authority - central government