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Tender

Invitation to Tender for Item Writing Service Framework for Standards and Testing Agency

Department for Education

F01: Prior information notice

Call for competition

Notice identifier: 2025/S 000-004513

Procurement identifier (OCID): ocds-h6vhtk-04dd9b

Published 11 February 2025, 11:49am

Section I: Contracting authority

I.1) Name and addresses

Department for Education

Sanctuary Buildings, 20, Great Smith Street

London

SW1P 3BT

Email

TendersTD.STA@education.gov.uk

Telephone

+44 8700012345

Country

United Kingdom

Region code

UK - United Kingdom

Internet address(es)

Main address

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-education>

I.3) Communication

Additional information can be obtained from the above-mentioned address

Tenders or requests to participate must be submitted electronically via

<https://education.app.jaggaer.com/web/login.html>

Tenders or requests to participate must be submitted to the above-mentioned address

I.4) Type of the contracting authority

National or federal Agency/Office

I.5) Main activity

Education

Section II: Object

II.1) Scope of the procurement

II.1.1) Title

Invitation to Tender for Item Writing Service Framework for Standards and Testing Agency

II.1.2) Main CPV code

- 800000000 - Education and training services

II.1.3) Type of contract

Services

II.1.4) Short description

The Department of Education, the Standards and Testing Agency (STA), is inviting potential suppliers to submit their bids for the new 2025-2029 Item Writing Services Framework.

II.1.5) Estimated total value

Value excluding VAT: £2,500,000

II.1.6) Information about lots

This contract is divided into lots: No

II.2) Description

II.2.3) Place of performance

NUTS codes

- UK - United Kingdom

II.2.4) Description of the procurement

The Department of Education, the Standards and Testing Agency (STA), is inviting potential suppliers to submit their bids for the new 2025-2029 Item Writing Services Framework.

As part of the test development process, the STA, on behalf of the Department for Education

(DfE), is seeking to appoint suppliers experienced in item writing to support the development of Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 National Curriculum tests.

We require a number of suppliers who are capable of understanding the relevant programmes of study, test frameworks, and curricula for particular tests, and developing high-quality test items with accompanying mark schemes and/or coding frames.

Successful suppliers will be added to the Item Writing Framework 2025-2029 and will have the opportunity to bid for each call-off from the framework between 1 September 2025 and 31 August 2029. Once an organisation has been accepted onto the framework, they will bid for item writing services contracts. An Invitation to Tender (ITT) will be disseminated to all those on the framework for all work. Each call-off from this framework will provide detailed requirements, including the subject and content domain areas, item types, mark range, difficulty range, and other desired properties.

The core requirements for the Item Writing Services Framework include the delivery of the following services in order to support the development of high-quality, accessible, and inclusive items suitable for DfE assessments: Key Stages 1 and 2 English grammar, punctuation, and spelling, English reading, and mathematics.

- Item writing
- Informal item trialling
- Reviewing, refining and amending items
- Item classification
- Design (items and texts)
- Text searching / sourcing (English reading)
- Reviewing texts (English reading)
- Text selection (English reading)/Context selection (science)
- Text trialling (English reading)
- Informal item and text trialling (English reading)
- Printing to meet handover or trialling requirements
- Developing mark schemes

- Developing coding frames
- Administration/ organisation of various elements

The initial framework term will be four years (September 2025 - August 2029). There is an option to extend the framework term for up to 12 months, until August 2030.

II.2.5) Award criteria

Price is not the only award criterion and all criteria are stated only in the procurement documents

II.2.6) Estimated value

Value excluding VAT: £2,500,000

II.2.7) Duration of the contract, framework agreement or dynamic purchasing system

Start date

1 September 2025

End date

31 August 2029

II.2.11) Information about options

Options: Yes

Description of options

One optional extension of up 12 months

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

Competitive procedure with negotiation

IV.1.3) Information about a framework agreement or a dynamic purchasing system

The procurement involves the establishment of a framework agreement

Framework agreement with several operators

Envisaged maximum number of participants to the framework agreement: 6

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

The procurement is covered by the Government Procurement Agreement: Yes

IV.2) Administrative information

IV.2.2) Time limit for receipt of expressions of interest

Date

30 April 2025

Local time

12:00pm

IV.2.4) Languages in which tenders or requests to participate may be submitted

English

IV.2.5) Scheduled date for start of award procedures

4 August 2025

Section VI. Complementary information

VI.4) Procedures for review

VI.4.1) Review body

Royal Courts of Justice

London

Country

United Kingdom