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Planning

Projects for Nature

DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS (Defra Network eTendering Portal)

F01: Prior information notice

Prior information only

Notice identifier: 2025/S 000-005676

Procurement identifier (OCID): ocds-h6vhtk-04e384

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Section I: Contracting authority

I.1) Name and addresses

DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS (Defra Network eTendering Portal)

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Contact

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Country

United Kingdom

Region code

UK - United Kingdom

Internet address(es)

Main address

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-environment-food-rural-affairs>

Buyer's address

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

I.3) Communication

Additional information can be obtained from the above-mentioned address

I.4) Type of the contracting authority

Ministry or any other national or federal authority

I.5) Main activity

Environment

Section II: Object

II.1) Scope of the procurement

II.1.1) Title

Projects for Nature

II.1.2) Main CPV code

- 79310000 - Market research services

II.1.3) Type of contract

Services

II.1.4) Short description

This tender will be for a service to provide a platform that connects corporate donations and nature recovery projects in England. It will also look to secure a service provider to generate business interest and manage the requests to fund nature recovery projects.

This tender will follow a pilot which is already running and due to complete on 31st March 2025. The pilot chose to use an online platform operated by CrowdFunder and business engagement and project management services delivered by Accenture. No public funding will be available for these services, instead the service provider's costs will be met wholly through fees paid on corporate donations. (The pilot has used this model and can make available the charges on corporate donations made through the CrowdFunder platform).

Specification will include:

- A supplier to set up and host the online platform that lists the projects and displays amount donated <https://www.projectsfornature.com>
- A supplier to lead on business engagement, provide project management expertise, and carry out comms functions.

These functions may be provided by the same supplier or suppliers working in partnership.

- The projects on Projects for Nature are England only, but the supplier may be open to extending the platform to other countries within the United Kingdom, provided there is interest from the relevant Devolved Administration.

II.1.5) Estimated total value

Value excluding VAT: £1

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

Main site or place of performance

UK

II.2.4) Description of the procurement

Scope of Work

The supplier(s) will be responsible for the following key areas:

1. Platform Management

Operational Oversight: Ensure the smooth functioning of the online platform, including user experience, technical support, and data security.

Platform Maintenance: Oversee updates, troubleshoot issues, and work with partners to improve functionality.

Project Onboarding: Onboard screened nature projects. Update project owners on project status, business interest, and funding.

Donor Onboarding: Onboard successful donors to the platform. Facilitate donation to selected nature projects and represent funding on platform.

Monitoring and Reporting: Provide regular performance reports, including metrics on corporate engagement and funding raised, to provide transparency, to demonstrate high environmental standards and to measure impact. Collect and collate reports on project outcomes from nature projects, using frameworks provided by Defra to ensure the projects contribute to nationally strategic objectives.

Payment Mechanism: Enable a streamlined financial transaction process between corporate donors and nature recovery projects, ensuring a user-friendly, efficient, and transparent system that minimizes friction and builds donor confidence.

2. Business Engagement

Corporate Outreach: Engage businesses of various sizes to participate in the platform, tailoring messaging to align with their sustainability priorities.

Business Screening: Ensure businesses onboarded meet the business eligibility criteria provided by Defra, reducing the risk of greenwash and encouraging the mitigation hierarchy to be followed. The eligibility criteria will be adapted from the pilot, then may be updated with the agreement of Defra and the supplier, depending on changes in the regulatory and policy landscape.

Stakeholder Relationship Management: Build and maintain strong relationships with corporate donors, ensuring repeat contributions and long-term commitments.

Pipeline Development: Identify and secure new opportunities for corporate funding, including outreach to underrepresented sectors.

3. Digital Communications and Branding

Content Strategy: Develop and implement a strategy for digital content to promote the platform, including blogs, case studies, and impact stories.

Social Media Management: Create and maintain a strong presence on relevant digital platforms, such as LinkedIn, driving traffic and engagement.

Brand Development: Ensure consistent and professional branding across all communications to build platform credibility.

4. Project Management

Process Coordination: Ensure efficient coordination across all partners on matters of platform operations, business engagement, nature project delivery, and communications activities.

Governance: establish governance mechanisms for project, including establishing a steering committee alongside a delivery team.

Timeline and Milestone Management: Establish and track timelines, deliverables, and milestones for all aspects of the platform.

Risk Management: Proactively identify risks and propose mitigation strategies to ensure project success.

5. Funding and Payment Model

Public Funding: This contract does not include any public funding from Defra or associated ALBs, except staff resource. All operational costs must be covered by the supplier through the agreed funding model.

Revenue from Corporate Donations: The supplier may generate revenue by charging a fee on each corporate donation made through the platform.

Fee Structure: The supplier must propose a transparent and fair percentage fee structure that incentivises corporate participation while covering operational and management

costs.

Justification: Proposals should include a rationale for the proposed fee percentage, demonstrating alignment with market norms and ensuring value for money for both donors and nature recovery projects.

Compliance and Transparency: The supplier must ensure the fee is clearly communicated to corporate donors and nature projects during the transaction process. Any changes to the fee structure will require prior written approval from Defra.

Sustainability of Operations: The supplier must demonstrate how the percentage fee will sustainably cover all aspects of platform operation, including management, engagement, communications, and reporting, while ensuring the long-term viability of the platform.

II.2.14) Additional information

Projects for Nature is an initiative that aims to connect corporate donations to nature recovery projects screened by government, ensuring alignment with national environmental priorities. The initiative has been in pilot from December 2023 – March 2025, raising £700K from 3 corporate donors and engaging over 35 businesses. To ensure long-term sustainability and scalability, the government seeks an external supplier(s) to lead on platform management, business engagement, digital communications, branding, and project management.

Objectives for Project for Nature

The supplier(s) will ensure the platform's effective operation, maintain alignment with national environmental priorities, and scale corporate engagement to maximize funding for nature recovery. The supplier(s) must deliver cost-effective solutions while maintaining high levels of stakeholder trust and public accountability.

The winning Supplier will be required to deliver the following:

Operational Platform: A fully functional and secure platform with measurable improvements in user experience and technical reliability within 3 months of contract start. The platform must enable financial transactions to happen between corporate donor and nature projects.

Engagement Reports: Monthly reports detailing corporate outreach, engagement metrics, and funding raised.

Communications Plan: A comprehensive digital communications strategy within 3 months, with quarterly updates on performance thereafter.

Branding Guidelines: A set of branding guidelines to ensure consistency across materials and media, within 3 months.

Governance System: A functioning governance system tailored to the platform, to be lightweight and effective, including a steering committee and delivery team.

Project Management Reports: Weekly updates to the delivery team on progress against milestones, risks identified, and mitigation actions taken.

Defra Group Support and Contributions

To ensure the effective functioning of the platform, Defra Group will provide the following key contributions:

1. Project Screening and Approval:

- o Defra Group will screen and approve nature recovery projects submitted to the platform, ensuring alignment with national environmental priorities and adherence to high-quality standards.
- o 34 projects have been screened and approved for inclusion on the platform to maintain a consistent and diverse pipeline of opportunities for corporate donors. Further project screening will likely focus on large-scale, strategic projects and a project selection strategy is being developed by Defra Group.

2. Strategic Oversight:

- o Provide guidance on the platform's alignment with government policy objectives and ensure that projects contribute to key environmental targets.
- o Participate in monthly governance meetings with the supplier to review platform performance and address strategic challenges.

3. Access to Networks and Expertise:

- o Share access to relevant government and ALB networks to facilitate engagement with high-quality nature recovery projects.
- o Provide policy advice and insights to ensure platform communications and messaging reflect government priorities.

4. Monitoring and Evaluation Framework:

- o Supply criteria and metrics for monitoring the environmental and social impact of funded projects.
- o Collaborate with the supplier to assess platform success and ensure accountability in donor contributions.

II.3) Estimated date of publication of contract notice

24 March 2025

Section IV. Procedure

IV.1) Description

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

The procurement is covered by the Government Procurement Agreement: Yes

Section VI. Complementary information

VI.3) Additional information

PLEASE REGISTER YOUR EXPRESSION OF INTREST TO THIS PIN BY EMAIL TO
david.pembry@defra.gov.uk WITH "PROJECTS FOR NATURE PIN" IN THE EMAIL
TITLE