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Tender

## **Defra Special Project - Stakeholder Engagement**

DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

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### **Scope**

### **Reference**

C32808

### **Description**

Defra is responsible for managing a confidential and sensitive project that is exploring options to deliver organisational change to support a long-term strategic objective. The project is complex, multi-year, and involves stakeholders who are accustomed to current arrangements and may be resistant even to the discussion of change.

We require an experienced Stakeholder Engagement Adviser to provide strategic advice and support in shaping and delivering an engagement approach that helps to build trust, address concerns, and guide stakeholders through a common-sense discussion of the options and their benefits/disbenefits, and potentially also a sensitive transition process. Defra has already completed stakeholder mapping but requires support in engagement planning, advisory services, and risk management.

### **Total value (estimated)**

- £170,000 excluding VAT
- £204,000 including VAT

Above the relevant threshold

### **Contract dates (estimated)**

- 16 July 2026 to 15 March 2027
- 8 months

### **Main procurement category**

Services

### **CPV classifications**

- 79112100 - Stakeholders representation services
- 79900000 - Miscellaneous business and business-related services
- 79416100 - Public relations management services
- 79416000 - Public relations services
- 79420000 - Management-related services
- 79416200 - Public relations consultancy services

### **Contract locations**

- UK - United Kingdom

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## **Participation**

### **Technical ability conditions of participation**

Suppliers must hold Cyber Essentials Certification.

### **Particular suitability**

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

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## **Submission**

### **Enquiry deadline**

6 February 2026, 5:00pm

### **Submission type**

Tenders

### **Tender submission deadline**

20 February 2026, 12:00pm

## **Submission address and any special instructions**

The procurement documents are

available for access, free of charge, at <https://defrafamily.force.com/s/Welcome>

Please note that the full bidder pack/specification will not be available to view until stage 2 and will only be released to successful tenders at stage 1 who have signed and returned an NDA to the Authority.

Any questions, requests to participate

or tender submissions must be

submitted electronically via this portal.

## **Tenders may be submitted electronically**

Yes

## **Languages that may be used for submission**

English

## **Award decision date (estimated)**

2 July 2026

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## **Award criteria**

Name	Description	Type	Weighting
Technical	50% of the quality weighting will be allocated to the technical criteria and questions (a percentage of this weighting will be allocated to stage 3 Virtual Pitch). 10% will be allocated to Social Value	Quality	60.00%
Commercial Envelope	40% - Commercial Evaluation will use relative scoring methodology as set out in the bidder pack. All Suppliers who have been successful at stage 2 (virtual pitch) will be commercially evaluated. Suppliers will be required to provide a quotation for the work using the rates on the rate card which they will also be required to submit. Both will be covered by a single document "the pricing schedule". Both will need to correlate with one another clearly demonstrating how the rates have been used to quote for the requirement. Rates on the rate card and the quote will be for specified grades/roles e.g. Director, which will be pre-determined by the contracting authority in order that all suppliers provide the same information	Price	40.00%

Name	Description	Type	Weighting
	<p>for equal and fair evaluation. The commercial evaluation will be the total combined day rate on the rate card (e.g. All-day rates added together) + the total value of the quote excluding non-staff costs. This recommended approach ensure that both the rate card and the quote are commercially evaluated. Non-staff costs on the quote will need to be reflected on the rate card as these will be fixed for the duration of the contract also but will not be commercially evaluated as non-staff cost may differ between suppliers.</p>		

## Other information

### Description of risks to contract performance

Risk that Ministerial Approval won't be given.

There is a risk that Ministerial approval of the overarching project won't be obtained in May/June. In this event the procurement may be withdrawn

## **Conflicts assessment prepared/revised**

Yes

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## **Procedure**

### **Procedure type**

Competitive flexible procedure

### **Competitive flexible procedure description**

IMPORTANT PLEASE READ CAREFULLY BEFORE YOU CONTINUE - Please be advised this project is subject to the Ministerial approval (anticipated date May/June 2026). We reserve our right to withdraw the tender at any place in the procurement process. We ask that you bare this in mind when considering tendering for this opportunity.

#### **Stage 1 – Selection Questionnaire Stage**

This stage will include Yes/No questions to help down-select suppliers invited to full tender based on their responses to the questions which will focus on required skills, qualifications and experience. In addition to Yes/No questions, there will be some written responses which will be formally evaluated using the standard evaluation scoring criteria.

Suppliers must meet a minimum consensus score of 70 on the written questions in addition to passing all the Yes/No questions to be taken through to Stage 2.

All successful suppliers at stage 1 will be taken through to Technical Evaluation (stage 2).

#### **Stage 2 – Full written tender submission**

All successful suppliers from stage 1 (PSQ) will be invited to submit their written bid for the tender. This will be subject to them signing and returning the NDA within 5 working days of receipt. Failure to return a signed NDA within this timeframe will result in disqualification from the tender process. Tenders must agree to this as part of Stage 1.

They will be required at this stage to also submit their commercial bid however this will only be evaluated if they are successful at stage 2 and invited to stage 3 (Virtual pitch). Commercial submissions will be requested upfront to avoid delays at the next stage.

### Stage 3 – Virtual Pitch

All suppliers will then be invited to present a virtual pitch on a specified question outlined in the bidder pack. The question will be based on a scenario and will help to demonstrate and provide confidence to the contracting authority that they have the capability to deliver the requirement to a high standard.

### Stage 4 – Commercial Evaluation

All Suppliers who have been successful at technical stage 2 (virtual pitch) will be commercially evaluated,

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## 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: Katie Thompson

Email: [katie.thompson@defra.gov.uk](mailto:katie.thompson@defra.gov.uk)

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

Region: UKI32 - Westminster

Organisation type: Public authority - central government