

This is a published notice on the Find a Tender service: <https://www.find-tender.service.gov.uk/Notice/009690-2021>

Tender

Customer Research and Engagement Framework

NORTHUMBRIAN WATER GROUP LIMITED

F05: Contract notice – utilities

Notice identifier: 2021/S 000-009690

Procurement identifier (OCID): ocds-h6vhtk-02ad4b

Published 5 May 2021, 12:47pm

Section I: Contracting entity

I.1) Name and addresses

NORTHUMBRIAN WATER GROUP LIMITED

Northumbria House, Abbey Road, Pity Me

DURHAM

DH15FJ

Contact

Laura McMain

Email

laura.mcmain@nwl.co.uk

Telephone

+44 7805786518

Country

United Kingdom

NUTS code

UK - United Kingdom

Internet address(es)

Main address

www.nwl.co.uk

I.3) Communication

The procurement documents are available for unrestricted and full direct access, free of charge, at

<https://s1.ariba.com>

Additional information can be obtained from the above-mentioned address

Tenders or requests to participate must be submitted electronically via

<https://s1.ariba.com>

I.6) Main activity

Water

Section II: Object

II.1) Scope of the procurement

II.1.1) Title

Customer Research and Engagement Framework

Reference number

NW2378

II.1.2) Main CPV code

- 79300000 - Market and economic research; polling and statistics

II.1.3) Type of contract

Services

II.1.4) Short description

The provision of water and wastewater services in England and Wales is a regulated business, and a number of organisations including the economic industry regulator, Ofwat, oversee our activities. Every five years we present a business plan to Ofwat detailing the prices we wish to charge our customers for the services that our customers want us to provide.

Customers are at the heart of everything we do and every decision we make. Our plans are co-created with our customers, and other stakeholders, through a robust programme of customer engagement, research and participation. We strive to ensure that our customer research and engagement is leading both within the water industry and compared to other sectors.

We are currently working towards the price review that will take place in 2024 (PR24) and require framework partners to provide customer research and engagement, and supporting consultancy services.

We will undertake both qualitative and quantitative research to understand our customers' priorities and the value they place on our services. This includes making decisions on the level of services customers can expect to receive and the investment we will make. Alongside this, we will require other professional services to consult on the use of the information we obtain from research to build suitable models from which we can devise cost effective plans.

II.1.6) Information about lots

This contract is divided into lots: No

II.2) Description**II.2.2) Additional CPV code(s)**

- 79310000 - Market research services

II.2.3) Place of performance

NUTS codes

- UKC - North East (England)
- UKH14 - Suffolk

- UKH3 - Essex

II.2.4) Description of the procurement

The provision of water and wastewater services in England and Wales is a regulated business, and a number of organisations including the economic industry regulator, Ofwat, oversee our activities. Every five years we present a business plan to Ofwat detailing the prices we wish to charge our customers for the services that our customers want us to provide.

Customers are at the heart of everything we do and every decision we make. Our plans are co-created with our customers, and other stakeholders, through a robust programme of customer engagement, research and participation. We strive to ensure that our customer research and engagement is leading both within the water industry and compared to other sectors.

We are currently working towards the price review that will take place in 2024 (PR24) and require framework partners to provide customer research and engagement, and supporting consultancy services.

We will undertake both qualitative and quantitative research to understand our customers' priorities and the value they place on our services. This includes making decisions on the level of services customers can expect to receive and the investment we will make. Alongside this, we will require other professional services to consult on the use of the information we obtain from research to build suitable models from which we can devise cost effective plans.

We require partners, with excellent professional experience, who can demonstrate a sound understanding of:

- A wide range of customer research methodologies including Citizens Assessment/Jury
- A broad range of economic research methodologies
- An in-depth understanding of behavioural economics
- The current regulatory landscape including Ofwat guidance
- Willingness to Pay and Triangulation methods
- Cost benefit modelling
- Our business and the industry in which we operate

- Innovative practice towards economic research and other customer engagement
- How to make complex information understandable for customers
- How to engage with customers and gain meaningful insight in

COVID safe ways

We welcome submissions from individual companies or consortiums of experts. If you are part of a consortium, please indicate who the lead organisation is.

We want to deliver a robust and innovative research and engagement programme so that our plan reflects our customer priorities and willingness to pay for services. Our research and engagement must stand up to robust scrutiny by our Executive Leadership Team, Board and regulators.

We will also engage with the Water Forum, (NWL's Customer Challenge Group). Members of the Water Forum will challenge our research methods, the robustness of the research and engagement and the interpretation of any results. The Water Forum will ensure that our plans adequately reflect the results of the engagement.

Objectives

We need to undertake an innovative and leading programme of research and engagement, to consider the following questions:

- What do our customers and stakeholders believe are the most important areas of service provided by NW and ESW?
- What improvements, if any, would our customers and stakeholders like to see to these services and what are they willing to pay for improvement to these services?
- Are the service improvements and WTP the same as those determined by the regulator?
- How would our customers and stakeholders like to see us incentivised or penalised for our performance against our service commitments?
- Vulnerable customer insights - as a rule of thumb in PR19 we worked to engage with vulnerable customers (financial / non-financial) separately on key elements of research to understand what really mattered to them

To achieve a robust customer focused set of data that answers the above questions, we

will undertake a qualitative exploratory phase followed by a number of quantitative studies to determine customer priorities and their Willingness to Pay (WTP) for potential service improvements.

It is imperative that, where appropriate, our research is statistically valid and representative of NW and ESW customer bases both demographically and geographically. The customers in the ESW region will be asked about service attributes relating only to water supply where customers in the NW region will be asked about service attributes relating to both water and sewerage services.

The period of any contract(s) resulting from this procurement will be 36 months from the contract start date. The length of the contract may be extended by negotiation with the supplier for a further 36 months.

This research covers three disciplines - research, economics, creative, we are therefore looking for a minimum of 3 suppliers for this framework with a maximum of 9

II.2.5) Award criteria

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

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

Duration in months

36

This contract is subject to renewal

No

II.2.10) Information about variants

Variants will be accepted: No

II.2.11) Information about options

Options: Yes

Description of options

After the initial 36 month period, the contract will have the option to extend for a further 36 month period.

Section III. Legal, economic, financial and technical information

III.1) Conditions for participation

III.1.1) Suitability to pursue the professional activity, including requirements relating to enrolment on professional or trade registers

List and brief description of conditions

All conditions will form part of the Pre qualification documentation

III.1.2) Economic and financial standing

Selection criteria as stated in the procurement documents

III.1.3) Technical and professional ability

Selection criteria as stated in the procurement documents

III.1.4) Objective rules and criteria for participation

List and brief description of rules and criteria

All conditions will form part of the Pre qualification documentation

Section IV. Procedure

IV.1) Description

IV.1.1) Type of procedure

Negotiated procedure with prior call for competition

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: 9

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 tenders or requests to participate

Date

21 May 2021

Local time

12:00pm

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

English

Section VI. Complementary information

VI.1) Information about recurrence

This is a recurrent procurement: No

VI.2) Information about electronic workflows

Electronic ordering will be used

Electronic invoicing will be accepted

Electronic payment will be used

VI.3) Additional information

Applicants are asked to note that this procurement process will be conducted electronically with all documents and communication being managed through the Northumbrian Water e-Sourcing Spend Management portal called 'Ariba'. Expressions of interest must be sent to the e-mail address laura.mcmain@nwl.co.uk before the deadline date of the 21st May 2021 at 12 noon. Once expression of interest has been received that contains the details below, applicants will be given access to the Ariba portal within 48 hours from request. This portal will contain all the tender documents associated with this procurement that are available at the time. An email link will also be provided to the email address you provide to access the portal. The deadline for return of the completed PQQ is the 21st May 2021 at 12noon. When sending expression of interest, applicants must provide the following information: 1) Full company name 2) Main contact details of the person who will be given access to the Ariba portal - Name, job title, E mail address and telephone

VI.4) Procedures for review

VI.4.1) Review body

TBC

tbc

Country

United Kingdom