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Planning

AIRR Expansion AI Cloud Compute

Department for Science, Innovation & Technology

UK2: Preliminary market engagement notice - Procurement Act 2023 - [view information about notice types](#)

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Scope

Reference

prj_5950

Description

The Department for Science, Innovation and Technology is responsible for delivering the UK's ambitions set out in the AI Opportunities Action Plan, and the UK Compute Roadmap, including expanding the existing advanced compute capacity of the AI Research Resource (AIRR).

AIRR currently comprises of two AI-optimised supercomputers (Dawn at University of Cambridge and Isambard-AI at University of Bristol). The UK government has committed to expanding this compute capacity 20x by 2030 through a blended portfolio that combines on-premises systems with cloud-based compute.

The procurement is focused on:

Scaling access to AI-appropriate compute for UK researchers, SMEs and public bodies;

Supporting innovation across the UK digital and research ecosystem;

Enhancing flexibility to match varying workload and user needs.

DSIT intends to procure a single supplier in a managed service provider capacity to integrate cloud compute resources into the existing AIRR ecosystem. This shall be conducted via a two-stage competitive selection process of Lot 6 suppliers on the CCS framework RM6190 Technology Services 4.

The successful supplier shall be responsible for:

Strategic Cloud Brokerage and Aggregation – managing relationships and subcontracts with Cloud Service Providers (CSPs), ensuring flexible and cost-effective access to accelerated compute.

AIRR Cloud Platform integration - developing a platform layer that integrates with the existing AIRRPortal and provides user support and usage visibility.

Managed Services including optimisation, forecasting, security, reporting and operation management.

DSIT anticipates that the successful supplier will be required over the duration of the contract to establish and manage subcontracts with a range of CSPs to meet diverse workload needs across the AIRR programme. In addition, the supplier may also utilise their own internal cloud resources, where appropriate, to fulfil the requirements and ensure optimal service delivery. The competition process is being designed under CCS Tech Services 4 Lot 6.

Suppliers on Lot 6 TS4 may wish to begin exploring potential CSP partnerships in advance of this procurement at their own risk.

Total value (estimated)

- £214,439,710 excluding VAT
- £250,000,000 including VAT

Above the relevant threshold

Contract dates (estimated)

- 23 June 2026 to 31 March 2029
- Possible extension to 31 March 2030
- 3 years, 9 months, 8 days

Main procurement category

Services

CPV classifications

- 72000000 - IT services: consulting, software development, Internet and support
- 72317000 - Data storage services
- 72315000 - Data network management and support services
- 72416000 - Application service providers
- 72500000 - Computer-related services

Contract locations

- UK - United Kingdom

Engagement

Engagement deadline

11 February 2026

Engagement process description

DSIT, in collaboration with CCS, shall host a webinar on 10th February 2026 at 10:00AM with suppliers on Lot 6 Tech Services 4. DSIT is seeking feedback on:

The Feasibility of the delivery partner model

Proposed timelines

Commercial and Technical Assumptions

Supplier capacity and interest.

Contracting authority

Department for Science, Innovation & Technology

- Public Procurement Organisation Number: PVWZ-3216-PVQL

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Region: UKI32 - Westminster

Organisation type: Public authority - central government

