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Opportunity

Project VIRTUS

Ministry of Defence

F17: Contract notice for contracts in the field of defence and security

Notice reference: 2021/S 000-013439

Published: 14 June 2021, 10:45pm

Section I: Contracting authority/entity

I.1) Name, addresses and contact point(s)

Ministry of Defence

MOD Abbey Wood (South)

Bristol

BS34 8JT

For the attention of

Potter Alex

Email(s)

Alex.Potter108@mod.gov.uk

Telephone

+44 03001647146

Country

United Kingdom

Internet address(es)

General address of the contracting authority/entity

<https://des.mod.uk/>

Address of the buyer profile

<https://des.mod.uk/>

Electronic access to information

<http://contracts.mod.uk>

Electronic submission of tenders and requests to participate

<http://contracts.mod.uk>

Further information

Further information can be obtained from the above mentioned contact point(s)

Specifications and additional documents (including documents for competitive dialogue and a dynamic purchasing system) can be obtained from

The above-mentioned contact point(s)

Tenders or requests to participate must be sent to

The above-mentioned contact point(s)

I.2) Type of the contracting authority

Ministry or any other national or federal authority, including their regional or local subdivisions

I.3) Main activity

Defence

I.4) Contract award on behalf of other contracting authorities/entities

The contracting authority is purchasing on behalf of other contracting authorities:

No

Section II: Object of the contract

II.1) Description

II.1.1) Title attributed to the contract by the contracting authority

Project VIRTUS

II.1.2) Type of contract and location of works, place of delivery or of performance

Supplies

Purchase

NUTS code

- UKK11 - Bristol, City of

II.1.5) Short description of the contract or purchase(s)

The Authority has a requirement for the ongoing supply, support and development of the VIRTUS integrated body armour, helmet and load carriage system.

VIRTUS is the UK Armed Forces integrated Body Armour, Helmet and Load Carriage system based on the soldier. The Authority successfully introduced the original VIRTUS system into service in 2015 and it has been gradually rolled out to the Infantry and Dismounted Close Combat (DCC) users. The success of the VIRTUS system informed the decision taken in 2019 by all Front-Line Commands that VIRTUS would become the primary body armour, helmet and load carriage system for all personnel (both Regular and Reserve).

The VIRTUS system focuses on 3 of the NATO soldier domains: survivability, mobility and sustainability. VIRTUS comprises of a head and torso sub-system with integrated load carriage and a Quick Release (QR) mechanism, to allow escape from water, confined space

or to allow rapid access to the body in an emergency. The Single Statement of Need (SSN) for the VIRTUS system states:

“The User shall be provided with a Torso and Head Sub-system that will provide personal protection, load carriage and will be the platform on which all other NATO capability domains for the Dismounted Close Combat (DCC) arena can be designed on, around or supported by, allowing the user to survive and operate effectively across the full spectrum of operating environments in order to achieve the mission.”

Further detail on the VIRTUS system can be found, with instructional videos, at the following url: <https://m.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLApZclWKcKb7pGgNy1aLHvqvO0y05Ecj8>

The Contract/s being tendered shall be for the ongoing supply of the VIRTUS system to all tri-service users including Army, Royal Navy and Royal Air Force. Additionally, some elements of the PLCE (Personal Load Carriage and Equipment) contract shall be incorporated into this tender. These shall be defined in the Invitation to Negotiate (ITN).

The Contract/s shall also include the ability for the Authority to utilise Post Design Services (PDS) for the ongoing development of the system to ensure that it continues to provide optimal performance as technology develops and matures. There may also be a requirement within the Contract/s for the provision of training in the use of the VIRTUS system and for the refurbishment and disposal of VIRTUS items.

It is anticipated that throughout the initial 5 year contract/s duration the Authority shall commit to purchase a minimum number of VIRTUS items, to be defined within the Invitation to Negotiate (ITN). The Authority shall also have the ability to purchase additional VIRTUS items, as and when required throughout the duration on the Contract/s for a range of tri-service users.

The requirement has been split into two Lots (Torso Sub-System and Head Sub-System), economic operators may apply for one or both Lots. A Contract shall be awarded for each Lot, however the Authority reserves the right to award one Contract covering both Lots if one economic operator is the successful bidder for both Lots.

Lot 1 – Torso Sub System (TSS) – the requirement for all body armour and load carriage equipment within the current VIRTUS system including but not limited to scalable tactical vests, soft armour filler, extremity protection, bergens and pouches. Also for Post Design Services (PDS) relating to these items.

Lot 2 – Head Sub System (HSS) – the requirement for all protective head equipment within the current VIRTUS system including but not limited to helmets, mandibles, visors, eye protection and ancillaries. Also for Post Design Services (PDS) relating to these items.

The Authority reserves the right to award contracts for the two lots detailed under this

Contract Notice on different dates, dependent upon the progress of evaluation and negotiations for each Lot.

The Cyber Risk Profile for the Contract/s is Very Low. Operators which are invited to tender shall be required to complete a Supplier Assurance Questionnaire (SAQ), as part of their tender submission, to demonstrate their compliance with the required cyber risk level.

An indicative schedule for this project is detailed below, please note that this is subject to change at the Authority's discretion and reflects no commitment on the Authority's behalf:

Invitation to Negotiate (ITN) Issued: September 2021

ITN Return: February 2022

Negotiations Phase (If Required): May 2022

Trials Phase: June 2022

Contract Award: Q1 2023

II.1.6) Common procurement vocabulary (CPV)

- 35815000 - Garments for anti-ballistic protection

Additional CPV code(s)

- 18143000 - Protective gear
- 18444110 - Helmets
- 18931100 - Rucksacks
- 18934000 - Kitbags
- 18936000 - Textile bags
- 33735100 - Protective goggles
- 35113400 - Protective and safety clothing
- 35811300 - Military uniforms
- 35812200 - Combat suits
- 35812300 - Combat gear
- 35813000 - Military helmets
- 35813100 - Helmet covers
- 35815100 - Bullet-proof vests

II.1.7) Information about subcontracting

The tenderer has to indicate in the tender any share of the contract it may intend to

subcontract to third parties and any proposed subcontractor, as well as the subject-matter of the subcontracts for which they are proposed

The tenderer has to indicate any change occurring at the level of subcontractors during the execution of the contract

The contracting authority/entity may oblige the successful tenderer to award all or certain subcontracts

The successful tenderer is obliged to specify which part or parts of the contract it intends to subcontract beyond the required percentage and to indicate the subcontractors already identified

II.1.8) Lots

This contract is divided into lots: Yes

Tenders may be submitted for all lots

II.1.9) Information about variants

Variants will be accepted: No

II.2) Quantity or scope of the contract

II.2.1) Total quantity or scope

Estimated value excluding VAT:

Range: between £104,000,000 and £350,000,000

II.2.2) Information about options

Options: Yes

Description of these options: The Duration of the Contract/s will be for a period of 5 years from the start date of Contract/s. The Contract/s will contain 5 additional 1-year options (for both Lots - the 60 months duration mentioned in the Lot Section of this Contract Notice is the initial duration only), to be exercised at the Authority's discretion in any combination of years, resulting in a potential total duration of 10 years.

II.2.3) Information about renewals

This contract is subject to renewal: No

II.3) Duration of the contract or time limit for completion

Duration in months: 60 (from the award of the contract)

Information about lots

Lot No

1

Lot title

Torso Sub-System (TSS)

1) Short description

Torso Sub-System (TSS) - the requirement for all body armour and load carriage equipment within the current Virtus system including but not limited to scalable tactical vests, soft armour filler, extremity protection, bergens and pouches. Also for Post Design Services (PDS) relating to these items.

It is anticipated that throughout the initial 5 year contract/s duration the Authority shall commit to purchase a minimum number of TSS items, to be defined within the Invitation to Negotiate (ITN). The Authority will have the ability to purchase additional TSS items as required through the duration on the Contract for a range of tri-service users.

2) Common procurement vocabulary (CPV)

- 35815000 - Garments for anti-ballistic protection

CPV additional

- 18143000 - Protective gear
- 18931100 - Rucksacks
- 18934000 - Kitbags
- 18936000 - Textile bags
- 35113400 - Protective and safety clothing
- 35811300 - Military uniforms
- 35812200 - Combat suits
- 35812300 - Combat gear
- 35815100 - Bullet-proof vests

Estimated value excluding VAT

Range: between £62,400,000 and £210,000,000

4) Indication about different date for duration of contract or starting/completion

Duration in months: 60 (from the award of the contract)

5) Additional information about lots

The Contracting Authority intends to use an e-Tendering system in this procurement exercise, please visit www.contracts.mod.uk for full details and to register your interest in this procurement.

Lot No

2

Lot title

Head Sub-System (HSS)

1) Short description

Head Sub System – the requirement for all protective head equipment within the current Virtus system including but not limited to helmets, mandibles, visors, eye protection and ancillaries. Also for Post Design Services (PDS) relating to these items.

It is anticipated that throughout the initial 5 year contract/s duration the Authority shall commit to purchase a minimum number number of HSS items, to be defined within the Invitation to Negotiate (ITN). The Authority will have the ability to purchase additional HSS items as required through the duration on the Contract for a range of tri-service users.

2) Common procurement vocabulary (CPV)

- 35813000 - Military helmets

CPV additional

- 18143000 - Protective gear
- 18444110 - Helmets
- 33735100 - Protective goggles

- 35113400 - Protective and safety clothing
- 35813100 - Helmet covers

Estimated value excluding VAT

Range: between £41,600,000 and £140,000,000

4) Indication about different date for duration of contract or starting/completion

Duration in months: 60 (from the award of the contract)

5) Additional information about lots

The Contracting Authority intends to use an e-Tendering system in this procurement exercise, please visit www.contracts.mod.uk for full details and to register your interest in this procurement.

Section III. Legal, economic, financial and technical information

III.1) Conditions relating to the contract

III.1.1) Deposits and guarantees required

Please refer to the Dynamic Pre-Qualification Questionnaire (DPQQ) for further details.

For details on how to access the DPQQ please refer to Section 'Information and formalities necessary for evaluating if the requirements are met'.

III.1.2) Main financing conditions and payment arrangements and/or reference to the relevant provisions governing them

Please refer to the Dynamic Pre-Qualification Questionnaire (DPQQ) for further details.

For details on how to access the DPQQ please refer to Section 'Information and formalities necessary for evaluating if the requirements are met'.

III.1.3) Legal form to be taken by the group of economic operators to whom the contract is to be awarded

Please refer to the Dynamic Pre-Qualification Questionnaire (DPQQ) for further details.

For details on how to access the DPQQ please refer to Section 'Information and formalities necessary for evaluating if the requirements are met'.

III.1.4) Other particular conditions to which the performance of the contract is subject, in particular with regard to security of supply and security of information

It is anticipated that this procurement shall be subject to Security Conditions at OFFICIAL-SENSITIVE level.

III.2) Conditions for participation

III.2.1) Personal situation

Criteria regarding the personal situation of economic operators (that may lead to their exclusion) including requirements relating to enrolment on professional or trade registers

Information and formalities necessary for evaluating if the requirements are met: Suppliers Instructions How to Express Interest in this Tender:

1. Register your company on the eSourcing portal (this is only required once)

- Browse to the eSourcing Portal
- Click the “Click here to register” link
- Accept the terms and conditions and click “continue”
- Enter your correct business and user details
- Note the username you chose and click “Save” when complete
- You will shortly receive an email with your unique password (please keep this secure)

2. Express an Interest in the tender

- Login to the portal with the username/password
- Click the "PQQs Open to All Suppliers" link. (These are Pre-Qualification Questionnaires open to any registered supplier)
- Click on the relevant PQQ to access the content.
- Click the “Express Interest” button in the “Actions” box on the left-hand side of the page.
- This will move the PQQ into your “My PQQs” page. (This is a secure area reserved for your projects only)
- Click on the PQQ code, you can now access any attachments by clicking the “Settings and Buyer Attachments” in the “Actions” box

3. Responding to the tender

- You can now choose to “Reply” or “Reject” (please give a reason if rejecting)
- You can now use the ‘Messages’ function to communicate with the buyer and seek any clarification
- Note the deadline for completion, then follow the onscreen instructions to complete the PQQ

- There may be a mixture of online & offline actions for you to perform (there is detailed online help available)

If you require any further assistance please consult the online help, or contact the eTendering help desk.

Criteria regarding the personal situation of subcontractors (that may lead to their rejection) including requirements relating to enrolment on professional or trade registers

Information and formalities necessary for evaluating if the requirements are met: Suppliers Instructions How to Express Interest in this Tender:

1. Register your company on the eSourcing portal (this is only required once)

- Browse to the eSourcing Portal
- Click the “Click here to register” link
- Accept the terms and conditions and click “continue”
- Enter your correct business and user details
- Note the username you chose and click “Save” when complete
- You will shortly receive an email with your unique password (please keep this secure)

2. Express an Interest in the tender

- Login to the portal with the username/password
- Click the "PQQs Open to All Suppliers" link. (These are Pre-Qualification Questionnaires open to any registered supplier)
- Click on the relevant PQQ to access the content.
- Click the “Express Interest” button in the “Actions” box on the left-hand side of the page.
- This will move the PQQ into your “My PQQs” page. (This is a secure area reserved for your projects only)
- Click on the PQQ code, you can now access any attachments by clicking the “Settings and Buyer Attachments” in the “Actions” box

3. Responding to the tender

- You can now choose to “Reply” or “Reject” (please give a reason if rejecting)
- You can now use the ‘Messages’ function to communicate with the buyer and seek any clarification
- Note the deadline for completion, then follow the onscreen instructions to complete the PQQ
- There may be a mixture of online & offline actions for you to perform (there is detailed online help available)

If you require any further assistance please consult the online help, or contact the eTendering help desk.

III.2.2) Economic and financial ability

Criteria regarding the economic and financial standing of economic operators (that may lead to their exclusion)

Information and formalities necessary for evaluating if the requirements are met: Please refer to the Dynamic Pre-Qualification Questionnaire (DPQQ) for further details.

For details on how to access the DPQQ please refer to Section 'Information and formalities necessary for evaluating if the requirements are met'.

Minimum level(s) of standards possibly required: Please refer to the Dynamic Pre-Qualification Questionnaire (DPQQ) for further details.

For details on how to access the DPQQ please refer to Section 'Information and formalities necessary for evaluating if the requirements are met'.

Criteria regarding the economic and financial standing of subcontractors (that may lead to their exclusion)

Information and formalities necessary for evaluating if the requirements are met: Please refer to the Dynamic Pre-Qualification Questionnaire (DPQQ) for further details.

For details on how to access the DPQQ please refer to Section 'Information and formalities necessary for evaluating if the requirements are met'.

Minimum level(s) of standards possibly required: Please refer to the Dynamic Pre-

Qualification Questionnaire (DPQQ) for further details.

For details on how to access the DPQQ please refer to Section 'Information and formalities necessary for evaluating if the requirements are met'.

III.2.3) Technical and/or professional capacity

Criteria regarding the technical and/or professional ability of economic operators (that may lead to their exclusion)

Information and formalities necessary for evaluating if the requirements are met: Please refer to the Dynamic Pre-Qualification Questionnaire (DPQQ) for further details.

For details on how to access the DPQQ please refer to Section 'Information and formalities necessary for evaluating if the requirements are met'.

Minimum level(s) of standards possibly required: Please refer to the Dynamic Pre-Qualification Questionnaire (DPQQ) for further details.

For details on how to access the DPQQ please refer to Section 'Information and formalities necessary for evaluating if the requirements are met'.

Criteria regarding the technical and/or professional ability of subcontractors (that may lead to their rejection)

Information and formalities necessary for evaluating if the requirements are met: Please refer to the Dynamic Pre-Qualification Questionnaire (DPQQ) for further details.

For details on how to access the DPQQ please refer to Section 'Information and formalities necessary for evaluating if the requirements are met'.

Minimum level(s) of standards possibly required: Please refer to the Dynamic Pre-Qualification Questionnaire (DPQQ) for further details.

For details on how to access the DPQQ please refer to Section 'Information and formalities necessary for evaluating if the requirements are met'.

Section IV: Procedure

IV.1) Type of procedure

IV.1.1) Type of procedure

Negotiated

Some candidates have already been selected (if appropriate under certain types of negotiated procedures): no

IV.1.2) Limitations on the number of operators who will be invited to tender or to participate

Envisaged minimum number 6 and maximum number 10

Objective criteria for choosing the limited number of candidates: The envisaged minimum number of economic operators is 6 and the maximum is 10. These economic operators shall be split across both lots, it is envisaged that each lot will have a minimum of 3 operators and a maximum of 5 invited to tender.

If a number of Economic Operators in a specific Lot receive exactly the same weighted score, that would result in them attaining the 5th place in the ITN for that specific Lot, then the Economic Operator in question achieving the highest score for the following question:

Section 2.2 – Post Design Services (PDS)

shall be awarded the fifth and final place in the ITN. Should the tied Economic Operators also score the same mark on the Post Design Services (PDS) question then the Authority reserves the right to take forward to ITN stage a number of Economic Operators greater than five (5) for that specific Lot.

The Authority reserves the right to take forward a number of Economic Operators lower than three (3) should it fail to receive at least three (3) compliant DPQQ submissions in either Lot.

Please refer to the Dynamic Pre Qualification Questionnaire (DPQQ) for evaluation criteria and further guidance.

IV.1.3) Reduction of the number of operators during the negotiation or dialogue

Recourse to staged procedure to gradually reduce the number of solutions to be discussed or tenders to be negotiated: yes

IV.2) Award criteria

IV.2.1) Award criteria

the criteria stated in the specifications, in the invitation to tender or to negotiate or in the descriptive document

IV.2.2) Information about electronic auction

An electronic auction has been used: no

IV.3) Administrative information

IV.3.1) File reference number attributed by the contracting authority

701224385

IV.3.2) Previous publication(s) concerning the same contract

Notice on a buyer profile

of 18 November 2020

Other previous publications

no

IV.3.3) Conditions for obtaining specifications and additional documents or descriptive document

Time limit for receipt of requests for documents or for accessing documents: 16 July 2021 - 5:00pm

IV.3.4) Time limit for receipt of tenders or requests to participate

16 July 2021 - 5:00pm

IV.3.6) Language(s) in which tenders or requests to participate may be drawn up

English

Section VI: Complementary information

VI.1) Information about recurrence

This is a recurrent procurement: No

VI.2) Information about European Union funds

The contract is related to a project and/or programme financed by European Union funds: No

VI.3) Additional information

The Contracting Authority intends to use an e-Tendering system in this procurement exercise, please visit www.contracts.mod.uk for full details and to register your interest in this procurement.

VI.4) Procedures for appeal

VI.4.1) Body responsible for appeal procedures

Ministry of Defence

MOD Abbey Wood (South)

Bristol

BS34 8JT

Email(s)

alex.potter108@mod.gov.uk

Telephone

+44 03001647146

Country

United Kingdom

VI.4.2) Lodging of appeals

Precise information on deadline(s) for lodging appeals: Any appeals should be lodged in accordance with the provisions of the Defence and Security Public Contracts Regulations Act 2011 (DSPCR2011).

VI.4.3) Service from which information about the lodging of appeals may be obtained

Ministry of Defence

MOD Abbey Wood (South)

Bristol

BS34 8JT

Email(s)

alex.potter108@mod.gov.uk

Telephone

+44 03001647146

Country

United Kingdom