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Planning

Active Debris Removal Phase 3 Research and Development Service

UK Space Agency

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

Notice identifier: 2025/S 000-013504

Procurement identifier (OCID): ocds-h6vhtk-04fe65 ([view related notices](#))

Published 7 April 2025, 5:29pm

Scope

Reference

UKSAC24_0095

Description

This notice relates to the intended procurement for a contract which is an exempted contract under s 3(6) and Schedule 2, Part 2 (Subject-matter exempted contracts), paragraph 22 (Research and Development Services) of the Procurement Act 2023 (the 'Act'). Exempted contracts are not a public contract as defined in s3 of the Act and therefore are not required to be procured in accordance with the provisions of the Act that relate to a covered procurement.

For the intended procurement UKSA will operate a transparent competition process, to which any potential supplier may respond. In doing so the procurement process may reflect processes and requirements set out in the Act in relation to covered procurements, or elements thereof.

The intended procurement will be for one contract, with a single legal entity.

This notice is not issued as a preliminary market engagement notice as required under S17 of the Act.

Contract dates (estimated)

- 1 March 2026 to 30 March 2031
- 5 years, 30 days

Main procurement category

Services

CPV classifications

- 34712000 - Spacecraft, satellites and launch vehicles
- 73100000 - Research and experimental development services
- 73300000 - Design and execution of research and development

Contract locations

- UK - United Kingdom

Engagement

Engagement deadline

30 April 2025

Engagement process description

Description:

The UK Space Agency (UKSA) would like to invite interested suppliers to the Industry Engagement Event (the 'Event') in relation to the planned procurement for Active Debris Removal Phase 3 Research and Development Service, (the 'UK ADR Project').

The aim of the Event is to engage with space sector organisations to:

- A) Understand the market's current capacity and capability to deliver this requirement, and their interest in the procurement.
- B) Outline the UK Space Agency's draft technical and mission requirements, contractual provisions and outline procurement strategy; and
- C) Give potential suppliers the opportunity to confirm their appetite and provide feedback on the intended approach.

Background of the requirements

The UK ADR Project is a national mission that aims to achieve the Space Sustainability priority set out in the UK Space Agency Corporate Plan 2022-25 - GOV.UK, supporting the National Space Strategy objective for the UK to lead the global effort to make space more sustainable.

The mission requires the safe capture and subsequent removal of at least two UK-licensed defunct satellites in the congested LEO zone. These debris, also known as the Target Satellites, must be unprepared for capture; that is, not fitted with technologies intended to aid In-Orbit Servicing and Manufacturing (ISAM), such as docking plates and fiducial markers. The Target Satellites must also be completely uncooperative.

The UK ADR Project will enable the UK to seize key opportunities in the global ADR and ISAM markets and establish itself as a global leader in space debris remediation.

Scope of the procurement:

- Development and construction of a vehicle capable of removing two agreed pieces of debris (defunct UK-registered satellites) from orbit, then remaining in orbit with the capability to be refuelled.

- Launch of the vehicle.
- Operation of the vehicle in orbit to remove two agreed space debris from orbit within an agreed time frame.
- Vehicle to be in a stable orbit and in a refuelling state at completion of mission.

Constraints and dependencies:

The budget for delivery of the UK ADR Project has not yet been confirmed. We are conducting this engagement with the market to explore interest and what is possible. The procurement is also conditional on successfully obtaining all necessary internal and external approvals.

Date, time and location:

The Event will take place on Thursday the 24th of April 2025 at 10.00am in Harwell in Oxfordshire (details TBC). If you are unable to attend in person there will be an opportunity to join the Event remotely. A Teams invite will be shared with you following registration.

Event registration- Please ensure you pre-register by sending an email to commercial@ukspaceagency.gov.uk confirming if you are attending in person or remotely. Please include this reference to the Event in the subject line of your email: UKSAC24_0095 Active Debris Removal Phase 3 R&D Service Engagement Day.

In order to ensure sufficient capacity, the number of attendees in person is limited to three participants per organisation. Should the room capacity become an issue, in person attendance will be allocated on the "first come first served basis" with those missing on securing the place being able to join the Event remotely. Please note that the Event is intended for potential suppliers that would enter into the contact with UKSA i.e. prime contractors or organisations that would form a lead member of any proposed consortium.

Please ensure that you secure your place at the Event by registering for it before 17:00 BST on Thursday 17th of April 2025.

Following registration, we will share with you further details of the venue and the agenda.

On the day:

There will be opportunity to ask questions regarding all aspects of the requirements. We intend to cover the following:

- Mission requirements

- Contractual provisions - including proposed KPIs, Liabilities, Insurance levels, Intellectual Property Rights
- Timeframes of the competition
- Procurement strategy
- Social value
- Pricing structure

Questions and answers will be captured and shared with the potential suppliers after the Event. We will welcome any feedback you would like to share via email after the Event. The timescale for provision of feedback will be end of play 30th April 2025.

Dependent on numbers expressing interest, our aim is to provide interested Suppliers with the opportunity to meet with us '1-to-1' in private, to help facilitate open and frank conversations. This could be in -person, if you are attending the event or remotely. If you are interested in such a meeting, please ensure this is clearly stated in your email response. If too many Suppliers express interest to accommodate on the day, places will be allocated on a first-come-first-served basis and/or we may at our sole discretion offer alternative dates to meet. Reasonable steps will be taken to provide the same amount of time to each Supplier.

Additional:

Please note the following general conditions:

- This engagement notice is not a call for competition and as such potential suppliers will need to express interest in the future competition once an invitation to participate in it is published.
- Any and all costs associated with preparation for and/or attendance at the Event and/or the production of a response in any form must be borne by potential suppliers. The UK Space Agency will not be liable for or contribute in any way to meeting potential supplier costs in relation to the Event.
- No information provided by a potential supplier in conjunction with the Event will be carried forward, used or acknowledged in any way for the purpose of evaluating the potential supplier, in any subsequent procurement process.
- Neither the issue of this notice, or the Event, or any information provided by UKSA at, or in conjunction with the Event, shall commit UKSA to conduct a procurement for this or any related contract and/or to award an such contract following a procurement process.

Participation

Particular suitability

Small and medium-sized enterprises (SME)

Contracting authority

UK Space Agency

- Public Procurement Organisation Number: PRTY-4245-MTJY

Quad Two Building (1st Floor), Rutherford Avenue, Harwell Science & Innovation Campus

Didcot

OX11 0DF

United Kingdom

Email: commercial@ukspaceagency.gov.uk

Region: UKJ14 - Oxfordshire

Organisation type: Public authority - central government