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Planning

Airlock Software for Research Analysis Platform

UK BIOBANK LIMITED

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

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Procurement identifier (OCID): ocds-h6vhtk-05067c

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Scope

Reference

UKB0023

Description

UK Biobank ("UKB") currently hosts a cloud-based health Research Analysis Platform which makes research projects and data accessible to researchers ("RAP"). The current RAP was procured by UKB in 2020 and was developed by DNAnexus, in collaboration with, and cloud infrastructure provided by, Amazon Web Services.

UKB intends to initiate a procurement exercise for the development of a new RAP ("RAP2.0") and associated services to take account of advances in technology over the past 5 years and its future requirements. The RAP2.0 is anticipated to be the default way that most researchers will access and analyse UKB's biomedical database and it is anticipated to comprise one or more software platforms or data analysis services that

work together to meet the diverse functional needs to the research community.

UKB currently intends to undertake separate procurements in relation to (i) the RAP2.0, (ii) cloud infrastructure, and (iii) automated airlock software to control extraction of data held by UKB for research purposes, whilst ensuring the ongoing security and confidentiality of the data ("Airlock"). UKB has established an informatics working group consisting of senior experts who will provide guidance to help develop the requirements for the technology listed at (i) - (iii) above.

It is currently envisaged that the first procurement to be undertaken will relate to the cloud infrastructure (in late 2025/early 2026), followed by the procurement of the RAP2.0 in 2026. The procurement of the airlock software may be conducted in parallel to, or follow sequentially, (i) and/or (ii).

This Preliminary Market Engagement Notice relates to the development of the Airlock software. Separate Preliminary Market Engagement Notices are being published for RAP2.0 and cloud infrastructure.

The Airlock acts as a data management tool to check compliance with confidentiality requirements when data is exported from the RAP2.0. The Airlock may also be required for UKB to achieve accreditation by DHSC/NHS as a Trusted Research Environment for the purpose of continuing to receive and make available linked health record data and is intended to provide additional assurance in addressing the principles set out in the ONS Five Safes Framework.

Contract dates (estimated)

- 31 October 2025 to 30 October 2031
- 6 years

Main procurement category

Services

CPV classifications

- 72230000 - Custom software development services

Contract locations

- UKC - North East (England)
- UKD - North West (England)
- UKE - Yorkshire and the Humber
- UKF - East Midlands (England)
- UKG - West Midlands (England)
- UKH - East of England
- UKI - London
- UKJ - South East (England)
- UKK - South West (England)

Engagement

Engagement deadline

30 June 2025

Engagement process description

UKB currently envisages that, in addition to the work of the informatics working group, it may engage with suppliers, researchers and users prior to launch of the Airlock procurement. Further details of any proposed engagement would be set out in a further preliminary market engagement notice including the activities to be undertaken (which may take place in stages and may take the form of one-to-one meetings with suppliers, researchers and/or users and/or requests to complete written questionnaires).

Interested organisations should register their interest in this potential opportunity via the following link: tenders@ukbiobank.ac.uk

Contracting authority

UK BIOBANK LIMITED

- Companies House: 04978912
- Public Procurement Organisation Number: PXGY-4832-TWCN

Units 1 & 2 Spectrum Way,

Stockport

SK3 0SA

United Kingdom

Email: tenders@ukbiobank.ac.uk

Region: UKD35 - Greater Manchester South East

Organisation type: Public authority - sub-central government