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Planning

Strategic Facial Matching API and associated Services

Home Office

F01: Prior information notice
Prior information only
Notice identifier: 2024/S 000-019598
Procurement identifier (OCID): ocds-h6vhtk-0472dd
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Section I: Contracting authority

I.1) Name and addresses

Home Office

49 Sydenham Road

Croydon

CR0 2EU

Contact

Pam Wilson

Email

strategicfacialmatchingproject@homeoffice.gov.uk

Country

United Kingdom

Region code

UK - United Kingdom

Internet address(es)

Main address

www.gov.uk

I.3) Communication

Additional information can be obtained from the above-mentioned address

I.4) Type of the contracting authority

Ministry or any other national or federal authority

I.5) Main activity

Public order and safety

Section II: Object

II.1) Scope of the procurement

II.1.1) Title

Strategic Facial Matching API and associated Services

II.1.2) Main CPV code

- 72000000 - IT services: consulting, software development, Internet and support

II.1.3) Type of contract

Services

II.1.4) Short description

Strategic Facial Matching (SFM) Project delivering infrastructure, software services and

data migration to create a new national facial matching service to be used for law enforcement purposes.

II.1.6) Information about lots

This contract is divided into lots: No

II.2) Description

II.2.2) Additional CPV code(s)

- 72000000 - IT services: consulting, software development, Internet and support

II.2.3) Place of performance

NUTS codes

- UK - United Kingdom

II.2.4) Description of the procurement

Home Office Biometrics (HOB) operates a Biometrics Services Gateway (BSG). Designed, built and managed in-house, with cloud hosting, the BSG provides a non-proprietary, adaptable and scalable internal interconnect between HOB systems, including but not limited to those which provide biometric storage and search.

Through a series of externally exposed APIs, the BSG also provides connectivity to other systems and thereby to users of biometrics services in the Home Office (e.g. HM Passports, Migration & Borders), to operational partners and agencies outside of the Home Office (e.g. local police forces) and to foreign government partners for international biometric exchange (e.g. 27 Prüm Member States).

The Strategic Facial Matching (SFM) Project is delivering infrastructure, software services and data migration to create a new national facial matching service to be used for law enforcement purposes, commencing with a foundational Minimum Viable Product (MVP) for Retrospective Facial Recognition (RFR) in Spring 2024. Some of the subsequent developments will be enabled by means of either a new BSG API or adaptations to an existing BSG API.

Since 2018 the mobile fingerprint check service known as HOB Strategic Mobile or Rapid Search has been made available as a BSG API. This service is currently consumed by 35 local police forces and Immigration Enforcement, each of which has either built or bought mobile platforms and apps which are integrated with the BSG API. Mobile biometric services could

be extended into the modality of face, exploiting the ubiquitous imaging capability now omnipresent in smartphones, together with apps and infrastructure which is already integrated with the BSG. This use case of facial search is referred to by policing as Operator Initiated Facial Recognition (OIFR) and is currently amongst the prioritised requirements of policing to maximise the benefits of facial recognition technology.

Following previous HOB market engagement activity on Strategic Facial Matching, it is our intention to deliver a short technical integration workshop. The workshop will provide an update on HOB's delivery of the interface and will provide a forum to walk through the updated interface documentation. This workshop will be aimed at policing suppliers and/or in-house IT departments that wish to understand this updated interface and will provide visibility of the interface changes and will enable the market to understand any necessary development and testing that may be required to support this interface in the future.

The workshop will be held online on 17th July 2024 10:00 – 12:00. Invites will automatically be sent to previous market engagement participants, but we are opening the meeting to suppliers who may have missed the previous session. If you are interested in attending the session, please e-mail strategicfacialmatchingproject@homeoffice.gov.uk by no later than Friday 12 July 2024.

Please note that suppliers will be required to sign a non-disclosure agreement (NDA) to participate in the session.

II.3) Estimated date of publication of contract notice

27 June 2024

Section IV. Procedure

IV.1) Description

IV.1.8) Information about the Government Procurement Agreement (GPA)

The procurement is covered by the Government Procurement Agreement: Yes