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Tender

Connectivity of Disparate Remote Autonomous Systems Framework Re-opening No.2

Ministry of Defence

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

Notice identifier: 2023/S 000-019652

Procurement identifier (OCID): ocds-h6vhtk-02cfbe

Published 10 July 2023, 3:50pm

Section I: Contracting authority/entity

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

Ministry of Defence

DES FCG-Comrcl1, Spruce 2B, MOD Abbey Wood

Bristol

BS34 8JH

Contact

Mrs Alicia Day

For the attention of

Day Alicia

Email(s)

Alicia.Day705@mod.gov.uk

Country

United Kingdom

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

Connectivity of Disparate Remote Autonomous Systems Framework Re-opening No.2

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

Services

Service category No 14: Research and development services and evaluation tests

Main site or location of works, place of delivery or of performance

Bristol, UK

NUTS code

- UK - United Kingdom

II.1.3) Information on framework agreement

The notice involves the establishment of a framework agreement

II.1.4) Information on framework agreement

Framework agreement with several operators

Duration of the framework agreement

Duration in years: 7

Estimated total value of purchases for the entire duration of the framework agreement

Estimated value excluding VAT:

£60,000,000

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

Information about the Framework: Contract Number 701575556 'Connectivity of Disparate Remote Autonomous Systems' is already awarded to a number of Framework participants as a result of the original competition & Framework Re-opening No.1. The Authority is re-

opening this multi-supplier Framework (the 'MDIS Project') for a 2nd time as previously notified in the first Contract Notice & the Framework Terms & Conditions, using the same procedure, criteria, terms & conditions as per the original competition. This is intended to be repeated on a twice-yearly basis & those companies already participating in the existing Framework (Reference 701575556) who entered at previous opportunities do not need to re-apply. For admin purposes this is done via a new DSP Project reference but any new entrants successfully passing the PQQ & being successful at the subsequent Invitation to Tender (ITT) will, in effect, be awarded a place under the existing Framework 701575556. This new Contract Notice is seeking new applicants only, & they must respond to the attached Pre-Qualification Questionnaire (PQQ), & if successful, they must then respond to an ITT when this is subsequently released. If successful at the ITT stage they will be awarded a Framework place. As with all Frameworks there is no guarantee of tasking opportunities or any level of throughput.

Process: The Authority intends to shorten the timescales for this tendering process to be completed, therefore only the PQQ will run for the required minimum time period of 30 days. For those companies successfully passing the PQQ stage & then invited to tender, the ITT submission deadline will be shorter (est 22 days) as there are no requirements for pricing or fully developed bid responses; there will be a requirement for mandatory compliance elements & a Technical White Paper for each Lot you are bidding to enter (outline Lot descriptions below; these are given to enable advance preparation of Technical White Paper submissions in these areas). The Framework Terms & Conditions are based on Standardised Contract 2 & will therefore be familiar to many bidders (potential bidders should note that DEFCON 703 applies to all tasks under the Framework).

The Authority cannot undertake to admit to the Framework any company that fails to complete or provide the mandatory elements of the tendering process at each stage of the competition. Every potential bidder should pay particular attention to Cyber security requirements and ensure they meet the mandatory compliance levels indicated. The Cyber Risk Profile of the Framework Contract is VERY LOW, RAR 421319428 as defined in Def Stan 05-138 (but this is reviewed for individual task requirements and may be higher).

As with any multi-supplier Framework, maintenance of up to date Points of Contact (PoC) for each participating company is essential; you are required to provide your main commercial PoC and an alternative PoC to cover any absences. You are required to keep these PoCs up to date and inform the Authority as soon as any PoC changes. The onus is on Framework participants to maintain their contact details and the Authority is under no obligation to use any other means to make contact in addition to the contact details given which must include the full postal address of the participating company (the site at which any resultant contract would be performed), the name, phone number and email addresses of each PoC and forwarding email addresses in the case of absence.) Failure to maintain, update and notify the Authority of changes to PoCs may result in your inability

to participate in mini-competitions and Industry events. The Defence Sourcing Portal has a facility for these updates and this should be used, but notification separately to the Authority's named Commercial Officer is also required.

The Requirement: The Authority has a developing requirement for the creation or adoption of a set of common standards and/or architecture for interfaces, data transfer and data management that can be used both for upgrades to legacy systems and future procurement to enable swift and simple interoperation of systems.

It is expected that the work will involve experimentation and demonstrations of multi-domain integrated systems which may include autonomous and swarming technologies. The aims are broad and inclusive, and the Authority is seeking engagement from all areas of the industrial marketplace with relevant contributions to make.

This requirement is considered to be particularly suitable for SMEs. The contractual mechanism is a multi-supplier framework, with designated Lots for each technical specialism as well as Lots for more general supporting services, as described in this CN. Potential bidders are invited to register their interest in receiving an Invitation to Tender to join the framework by first completing the associated PQQ.

The Authority intends to invite all eligible companies who pass the PQQ to tender for the Framework. Note that while there is no down-selection to any specific numbers of bidders at this stage, only companies who can demonstrate relevance to the subject matter of the Lots within the Framework through their previous or existing portfolio of work (of which examples are requested via the PQQ) will pass the PQQ and be considered eligible to receive an Invitation to Tender at the next stage of the competition. Potential bidders may bid to join a single Lot or multiple Lots.

As with any framework, whilst there can be no guarantee of any particular quantity of work being put through it, the Authority intends to conduct further mini-competitions to select successful framework contractors or collaborative teams of framework contractors within individual Lots or across a number of Lots in any combination, and expects that the work will be conducted progressively giving ongoing opportunities to many of the framework participants.

The Lots include, but may not be limited to, the following subject matter themes:

Autonomous Platforms and Payload Integration

Data Management and Fusion

Machine Tasking and Decision Making

System of System (SoS) Management, Integration and Implementation

Comms Bearers, Network Architecture & Services

Customer Advisory Network (may include but not be limited to sub-Lots e.g. assurance, operationalisation, third party security testing, testing and evaluation).

Whilst the Framework has been operating since early 2022, and any new joiners at this stage may feel that much has already been achieved or is already in train at the point of 2nd re-opening, this is certainly true, however, although there is a current set of Tasks already underway that new joiners cannot compete for, it is anticipated that more related tasks will emerge as a result of the existing work, and the Authority, while unable to commit to any level or type of opportunity in the future, views the subsequent period of activity as particularly exciting and would welcome eligible new joiners to take part in the further development of the MDIS Project outcomes. Of course it will still be open to any new joiners to team with existing Framework members if successful in this ITT, and it is possible to enter into subcontract relationships with existing Framework members if that is considered beneficial to interested companies (the Authority cannot provide any assistance in this regard).

The Authority expects that few single suppliers will be capable of taking on the breadth and scope of each piece of work and therefore collaboration will be required between suppliers in a competitive environment (collaborative team bids will be encouraged for mini-competitions). There is no prime contractor.

A Community of Interest for all framework participants will be established through which Working Groups will be held, led by the Authority, to analyse and propose next steps or further specific areas of interest under the Lotted themes. All framework participants will be required to contribute to the Working Groups according to their specialism. Feedback from the WG will be given to the Community of Interest (subject to security considerations). Intellectual Property generated under the framework taskings and its Community of Interest will be owned by the Authority under DEFCON 703.

NB: The Authority must ensure that where access is required to classified information in the course of any tasking or Working Group activity, then this access will only be granted to framework participants with suitable security clearance in place at the time a task is raised. Whilst a particular level of security clearance is not essential for initial entry to the framework following the Invitation to Tender process, the Authority reserves the right to refuse inclusion of any framework participant who does not possess the required clearance level at the time a mini-competition for a task is initiated or a classified Working Group is scheduled.

II.1.6) Common procurement vocabulary (CPV)

- 73410000 - Military research and technology

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

II.1.8) Lots

This contract is divided into lots: Yes

Tenders may be submitted for one or more 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 £1 and £60,000,000

II.2.2) Information about options

Options: Yes

Description of these options: Annual extension up to a maximum of 7 years.

Provisional timetable for recourse to these options:

In months: 3 (from the award of the contract)

II.2.3) Information about renewals

This contract is subject to renewal: Yes

Information about lots

Lot No

1

Lot title

Autonomous Platforms and Payload Integration

1) Short description

Autonomous Platforms and Payload Integration

2) Common procurement vocabulary (CPV)

- 73410000 - Military research and technology

Estimated value excluding VAT

£1

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

Data Management and Fusion

1) Short description

Data Management and Fusion

2) Common procurement vocabulary (CPV)

- 73410000 - Military research and technology

Estimated value excluding VAT

£1

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

3

Lot title

Machine Tasking and Decision Making

1) Short description

Machine Tasking and Decision Making

2) Common procurement vocabulary (CPV)

- 73410000 - Military research and technology

Estimated value excluding VAT

£1

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

4

Lot title

System of System (SoS) Management, Integration and Implementation

1) Short description

System of System (SoS) Management, Integration and Implementation

2) Common procurement vocabulary (CPV)

- 73410000 - Military research and technology

Estimated value excluding VAT

£1

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

5

Lot title

Comms Bearers, Network Architecture & Services

1) Short description

Comms Bearers, Network Architecture & Services

2) Common procurement vocabulary (CPV)

- 73410000 - Military research and technology

Estimated value excluding VAT

£1

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

6

Lot title

Customer Advisory Network (may include but not be limited to sub-Lots e.g. assurance, operationalisation, third party security testing, testing and evaluation)

1) Short description

Customer Advisory Network (may include but not be limited to sub-Lots e.g. assurance, operationalisation, third party security testing, testing and evaluation)

2) Common procurement vocabulary (CPV)

- 73410000 - Military research and technology

Estimated value excluding VAT

£1

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

Particular mini-competitions may be restricted to framework contractors with suitable security clearance.

III.1.5) Information about security clearance

Candidates which do not yet hold security clearance may obtain such clearance until: 31 July 2024

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)

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- 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: As stated in the PQQ

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: As stated in the PQQ

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: As stated in the PQQ

III.3) Conditions specific to services contracts

III.3.1) Information about a particular profession

Execution of the service is reserved to a particular profession: No

Section IV: Procedure

IV.1) Type of procedure

IV.1.1) Type of procedure

Restricted

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: no

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

707949451

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

Notice on a buyer profile

Notice number: [2022/S 000-018477](#)

Other previous publications

no

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

9 August 2023 - 11:59pm

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: Yes

Estimated timing for further notices to be published: twice yearly

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

Bristol

Country

United Kingdom

VI.4.1) Body responsible for mediation procedures

Ministry of Defence

Bristol

Country

United Kingdom

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

Ministry of Defence

Bristol

Country

United Kingdom