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Planning

External Audit Services – Pre-Market Engagement

University of Chester

F01: Prior information notice

Prior information only

Notice identifier: 2024/S 000-021495

Procurement identifier (OCID): ocds-h6vhtk-047d18

Published 12 July 2024, 3:17pm

Section I: Contracting authority

I.1) Name and addresses

University of Chester

Parkgate Road

Chester

CH1 4BJ

Contact

Procurement Services

Email

procurement@chester.ac.uk

Country

United Kingdom

NUTS code

UKD - North West (England)

National registration number

525938

Internet address(es)

Main address

www.chester.ac.uk

Buyer's address

<https://in-tendhost.co.uk/universityofchester>

I.3) Communication

Additional information can be obtained from the above-mentioned address

I.4) Type of the contracting authority

Body governed by public law

I.5) Main activity

Education

Section II: Object

II.1) Scope of the procurement

II.1.1) Title

External Audit Services – Pre-Market Engagement

Reference number

PIN 2024-Jul-01

II.1.2) Main CPV code

- 79212000 - Auditing services

II.1.3) Type of contract

Services

II.1.4) Short description

The University is looking to tender, in the near future, for a supplier to provide external audit services and would like to engage with the marketplace by means of discussions via individual virtual meetings on Teams, or in person if this would be preferred, with our Chief Financial Officer to help enable the University to understand the dynamics of the current marketplace. This will also enable the opportunity for potential suppliers to ask us any questions or raise any issues directly with the University. This exercise is not a call for competition but engagement with the market to help inform our procurement approach.

II.1.5) Estimated total value

Value excluding VAT: £800,000

II.1.6) Information about lots

This contract is divided into lots: No

II.2) Description

II.2.2) Additional CPV code(s)

- 79212000 - Auditing services
- 79212100 - Financial auditing services

- 79200000 - Accounting, auditing and fiscal services
- 79210000 - Accounting and auditing services
- 79212300 - Statutory audit services

II.2.3) Place of performance

NUTS codes

- UKD - North West (England)

Main site or place of performance

North West

II.2.4) Description of the procurement

The University is looking to tender, in the near future, for a supplier to provide external audit services and would like to engage with the marketplace by means of discussions via individual virtual meetings on Teams, or in person if this would be preferred, with our Chief Financial Officer to help enable the University to understand the dynamics of the current marketplace. This will also enable the opportunity for potential suppliers to ask us any questions or raise any issues directly with the University. This exercise is not a call for competition but engagement with the market to help inform our procurement approach. The University envisages that the scope of the contract will include the following: The primary role of the external auditors will be to report on the financial statements of the University of Chester and to carry out whatever examination of the statements and underlying records and control systems is necessary to reach an opinion on the statements. You will be required to report to the University Council by means of a management letter. University financial statements and auditor's management letter are submitted to Office for Students (OfS) five months after the 31st July year end. They are scrutinised by the Audit and Risk Management Committee in November and approved by University Council at the end of November. The on-site work usually takes place during mid-September to mid-October. The scope also includes audits of annual returns for the Teachers Pension Scheme and the US Department of Education, as well as individual project audits as required. The successful tenderer will also be required to report on whether recurrent and specific grants from OfS (and other bodies and restricted funds where appropriate) have been properly applied for the purposes provided, in accordance with the University of Chester's Memorandum of Assurance and Accountability with OfS and that conditions of grant have been met. The appointed provider will be required to: (a) operate in accordance with published audit and accounting standards; (b) meet professional, ethical and quality standards in completing its work; (c) comply with terms of reference approved by the University Council; (d) provide suitably qualified and experienced staff; (e) endeavour to promote continuity of staffing; (f) ensure that the staff employed will receive appropriate ongoing training; (g) provide the OfS Assurance Service

with access to relevant working papers and correspondence in accordance with this Code;(h) set out proposals for liaison with other auditors. The successful tenderer will also be required to demonstrate they can provide a comprehensive service which will satisfy the University's requirement for an External Audit Service, as detailed in the OfS Terms and conditions of funding for higher education institutions Annex C: Audit Code of Practice. The auditor must be aware of developments within Higher Education particularly where these may have mandatory applications to institutions and/ or potentially have significant financial effects. Full details of the requirements will be contained within the tender procurement documents and the tender will be advertised via FTS and Contracts Finder notices. The current estimated timescale for the tender is for a single stage Open tender to begin on 1st October 2024, close on 5th November 2024 and for a potential short list of tendering suppliers to attend a clarification meeting with University Audit and Risk Management Committee on 21st November 2024. For more information and to arrange an appointment for a discussion, please Express Interest in the Pre-Market Engagement and then register your details by sending a correspondence with your organisation's contact details via the In-Tend e-tendering portal — <http://in-tendhost.co.uk/universityofchester> Registration to this site is free for suppliers.

II.3) Estimated date of publication of contract notice

1 October 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