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Award

## **Partnership Agreement to use The Crown Estate's Marine Data Exchange**

CROWN ESTATE SCOTLAND

F15: Voluntary ex ante transparency notice

Notice identifier: 2023/S 000-026145

Procurement identifier (OCID): ocids-h6vhtk-03f9f9

Published 5 September 2023, 8:59am

### **Section I: Contracting authority/entity**

#### **I.1) Name and addresses**

CROWN ESTATE SCOTLAND

2 Lister Square

EDINBURGH

EH39GL

#### **Contact**

Andy Riley

#### **Email**

[andy.riley@crownestatescotland.com](mailto:andy.riley@crownestatescotland.com)

#### **Telephone**

+44 1313761579

#### **Country**

United Kingdom

**Region code**

UKM75 - Edinburgh, City of

**Justification for not providing organisation identifier**

Not on any register

**Internet address(es)**

Main address

<https://www.crownestatescotland.com/>

**I.4) Type of the contracting authority**

Other type

Public Corporation

**I.5) Main activity**

Other activity

Property

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## **Section II: Object**

### **II.1) Scope of the procurement**

#### **II.1.1) Title**

Partnership Agreement to use The Crown Estate's Marine Data Exchange

#### **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**

This is a voluntary ex ante transparency (VEAT) notice. Crown Estate Scotland will enter a partnership with The Crown Estate to develop its Marine Data Exchange (MDE) to enable its use by Crown Estate Scotland. Both organisations will sign a Technical Agreement that outlines the scope of work required for the further development of MDE to accept marine data submissions from Crown Estate Scotland tenants (CES onboarding), and there will be a Partnership Agreement entered into which will define future arrangements for both parties for the continuing use and future development of MDE.

#### **II.1.6) Information about lots**

This contract is divided into lots: No

#### **II.1.7) Total value of the procurement (excluding VAT)**

Value excluding VAT: £275,000

### **II.2) Description**

#### **II.2.3) Place of performance**

NUTS codes

- UK - United Kingdom

#### **II.2.4) Description of the procurement**

Crown Estate Scotland is a manager of seabed resource in Scotland. It leases areas of seabed for a variety of uses including offshore wind, tidal and wave sites. The leases for

these uses contain data clauses obliging the tenant to supply to Crown Estate Scotland certain data collected during the planning, development, and operation of their sites.

Crown Estate Scotland wishes to store this data and, where applicable, make it publicly available as free open data to safeguard the retention of data and information for industry and future research, to provide other offshore renewable developers with access to data and information to enhance opportunities on the seabed, to work with tenants to promote best practice data and metadata management, and to make available that data and metadata in standard formats meeting required data standards so that it is findable, accessible, interoperable, and re-useable.

This is a voluntary ex ante transparency (VEAT) notice. Crown Estate Scotland will enter a partnership with The Crown Estate to enable the use of its Marine Data Exchange (MDE) platform. The MDE will be further developed to accept marine data submissions from Crown Estate Scotland tenants, and there be an enduring partnership agreement between the two organisations to continue to partner and contribute to future MDE improvements.

Offshore renewables is a UK-wide industry. MDE is already established as the nationally recognised portal for access to marine data relating to offshore wind farms in the remainder of the UK and there are several tenants leasing seabed from both The Crown Estate and Crown Estate Scotland. The recent Independent Report of the Offshore Wind Champion which outlines ways to accelerate offshore wind operations in the whole of the UK recommends that Scottish Government, Crown Estate Scotland and The Crown Estate should align on the use of the Marine Data Exchange as a single UK-wide national database for all marine environmental data.

The Crown Estate own the MDE portal and have a development partner and a design partner who implement development and design changes to the MDE portal requested by The Crown Estate. Both the developer and design partners are part way through a 3-year contract. The development partner also provides technical support services. The high-level architecture of the portal includes:

1. A public access site to the portal
2. A user login and site for data submitters, quality assurance and administration
3. An integration from the MDE portal to The Crown Estate's own existing secure Azure subscription
4. An integration with a separate shared Azure container specifically for data that is selected as being public. Data from either organisation's confidential cloud storage that is selected to be made public will be published as a copy into the share Azure container and accessible via the MDE public site.

The further development will include:

1. Additional logins for data submissions from Crown Estate Scotland's tenants, a quality assurance login for the quality assurance provider to Crown Estate Scotland, and an administration login for Crown Estate Scotland
2. An integration from the MDE portal to Crown Estate Scotland's own existing secure Azure subscription
3. An integration with a separate shared Azure container specifically for data that is selected as being public. Data from either organisation's confidential cloud storage that is selected to be made public will be published as a copy into the share Azure container and accessible via the MDE public site.
4. Migrating existing Crown Estate Scotland data which is currently stored locally into MDE. There is currently 14Tb of data retained by Crown Estate Scotland. This is expected to rise considerably over the next 2 to 3 years. There is now almost 300Tb of marine data stored in MDE and there is the possibility that data from Crown Estate Scotland tenants could reach an equivalent size over time.

It is anticipated that the Technical Agreement will be executed by the end of September 2023 and development will start in September/October 2023 and is expected to last for 4 to 8 months. Crown Estate Scotland will pay The Crown Estate approximately £275,000 for the development outlined above. The Crown Estate's existing development and design partners will carry out the works which will be project managed by The Crown Estate. The Crown Estate and Crown Estate Scotland will agree an iterative development, test, and sign-off procedure.

#### **II.2.11) Information about options**

Options: Yes

Description of options

The Technical Agreement will be for the initial product development of the MDE portal (CES onboarding) and the continuing use of the MDE portal by Crown Estate Scotland. A separate Partnership Agreement will be concluded which will outline the governance, funding, and obligations of both parties for a continuing partnership on development roadmap of the MDE portal.

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## Section IV. Procedure

### IV.1) Description

#### IV.1.1) Type of procedure

Award of a contract without prior publication of a call for competition in the cases listed below

- The procurement falls outside the scope of application of the regulations

Explanation:

Justification for selected award procedure:

Regulation 33(1)(b)(ii) and/or (iii) of The Public Contracts (Scotland) Regulations 2015 - CES has concluded that the works, supplies or services can be supplied only by a particular economic operator because: competition is absent for technical reasons; and/or the protection of exclusive rights, including intellectual property rights; and no reasonable alternative or substitute exists and the absence of competition is not the result of an artificial narrowing down of the parameters of the procurement.

Explanation:

This is an arrangement to become a partner on an existing nationally recognised data store for offshore renewable developer marine data in the rest of the UK. CES has considered alternative arrangements and found that they are not suitable for technical reasons as they are unable to accept all of CES's tenants' data types and are not ideally placed for direct use by CES' tenants for data management. CES have concluded that there are significant advantages to using the MDE in that it is capable of being used now for data management, it is a unique product and there are numerous advantages to the industry, specialists, and the public, for having one location for marine data relating to offshore renewables in the UK. As TCE owns the intellectual property rights in MDE, there is no other way to access MDE other than to enter a contract with TCE for the use of MDE.

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

The procurement is covered by the Government Procurement Agreement: Yes

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## Section V. Award of contract/concession

A contract/lot is awarded: Yes

## **V.2) Award of contract/concession**

### **V.2.1) Date of conclusion of the contract**

1 September 2023

### **V.2.2) Information about tenders**

The contract has been awarded to a group of economic operators: No

### **V.2.3) Name and address of the contractor/concessionaire**

The Crown Estate

1 St James's Market

London

SW1Y 4AH

Country

United Kingdom

NUTS code

- UK - United Kingdom

Justification for not providing organisation identifier

Not on any register

The contractor/concessionaire is an SME

No

### **V.2.4) Information on value of contract/lot/concession (excluding VAT)**

Initial estimated total value of the contract/lot/concession: £275,000

Total value of the contract/lot/concession: £275,000

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## **Section VI. Complementary information**

### **VI.4) Procedures for review**

#### **VI.4.1) Review body**

Edinburgh Sheriff Court

Edinburgh

Country

United Kingdom