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Contract

The NIHR Evaluations, Trials and Studies Coordinating Centre (NETSCC)

Department of Health and Social Care

F20: Modification notice

Notice identifier: 2024/S 000-026222

Procurement identifier (OCID): ocds-h6vhtk-048bd1

Published 16 August 2024, 4:53pm

Section I: Contracting authority/entity

I.1) Name and addresses

Department of Health and Social Care

39 Victoria Street

London

SW1H 0EU

Contact

Natasha Boreham

Email

natasha.boreham@dhsc.gov.uk

Country

United Kingdom

NUTS code

UKI32 - Westminster

Internet address(es)

Main address

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-of-health-and-social-care>

Buyer's address

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-of-health-and-social-care>

Section II: Object

II.1) Scope of the procurement

II.1.1) Title

The NIHR Evaluations, Trials and Studies Coordinating Centre (NETSCC)

Reference number

C0291

II.1.2) Main CPV code

- 75120000 - Administrative services of agencies

II.1.3) Type of contract

Services

II.2) Description

II.2.2) Additional CPV code(s)

- 98113000 - Services furnished by specialist organisations

II.2.3) Place of performance

NUTS codes

- UK - United Kingdom

Main site or place of performance

United Kingdom

II.2.4) Description of the procurement at the time of conclusion of the contract:

• Established processes for commissioning R&D within NIHR and DH were set up to promote probity in spending public money and equality of opportunity. NETSCC will be expected to adopt similar standards of commissioning for all its managed programmes. This is an essential requirement and bidders must demonstrate an understanding of the process and the skills required to deliver it which, crucially, includes scientific secretariat skills.

- NETSCC will be required to provide administrative support to all systems and structures

used to identify and prioritise research of relevance to those who plan, provide or receive NHS and other health and care services as well as providing systems and processes for research commissioning, monitoring and project management.

- NETSCC will provide scientific secretariat support, under the direction of a Programme Director, to expert advisory committees and will advise on the prioritisation of research proposals and on commissioning decisions.
- NETSCC will be required to make all necessary arrangements for commissioning and other meetings. For example, the maintenance of committee membership lists, the production and distribution of all papers necessary well in advance of meetings, the taking of minutes of meetings (which will include discussions of science and research methodology) and the prompt circulation of accurate minutes following meetings.
- NETSCC will be responsible for the issuing of project and programme contracts (standard contract format) which will be sent for final signature to the DH Science, Research and Evidence Directorate (SRED).
- All projects and programmes will require a detailed timetable with milestones. NETSCC will monitor projects and programmes and will take receipt of regular reports ensuring that researchers keep to the timetable and achieve milestones. This will require a solid understanding of the science as well as strong administrative skills.
- NETSCC will be responsible for forecasting, profiling and reporting on annual budgets from April 1st to March 31st of each of the years covered, reporting quarterly and monitoring monthly.
- Payments to R&D project and research infrastructure contractors are made by DH normally quarterly in arrears. NETSCC will take responsibility for informing SRED when project/ programme contracts have started in order that scheduled payments may commence, and for alerting SRED of any adverse event necessitating suspension of payments.
- NETSCC will be required to set up and run, in liaison with SRED, financially sound and transparent accounting systems. NETSCC will be expected to adopt information management systems that are compatible with systems already in use by other parts of NIHR. NETSCC will provide progress reports, including financial summaries, in respect of the managed programmes as required. Bidders must be able to demonstrate the necessary skills to deliver this aspect of their bid.
- NETSCC will take such steps as are necessary to ensure that accurate, well presented, peer reviewed final reports and executive summaries are forthcoming promptly from all projects funded, and that these reports and summaries are entered into appropriate database and library systems. Specifically, NETSCC will deliver the NIHR Journals

Library series and all outputs from NETSCC will be included in that series. Relevant NIHR funded research commissioned through the NIHR Central Commissioning facility will also be included (namely Programme Grants for Applied Research) as well as selected outputs from other funders where there is a shared interest, namely the Medical Research Council's (MRC) Methodology Research Programme.

- NETSCC will, as routine, alert the Department to forthcoming outputs through an outputs notification process, highlighting any outputs considered sensitive. As part of that process, NETSCC will, as a minimum, provide notice and copies of forthcoming publications, including press releases, arising from funded research at least 28 days prior to publication. Contractors will alert the Department immediately to such forthcoming publications and ensure that it receives advance copies as soon as these are available.
- NETSCC will use its best endeavours to ensure, as far as possible, that intellectual property rights (IPR) of value to the NHS are properly protected and managed, and agreements are drawn up to ensure the NHS receives an appropriate share of any earnings from IPR.

II.2.7) Duration of the contract, framework agreement, dynamic purchasing system or concession

Start date

1 April 2018

End date

31 March 2025

In the case of framework agreements, provide justification for any duration exceeding 4 years

N/A

II.2.13) Information about European Union Funds

The procurement is related to a project and/or programme financed by European Union funds: No

Section IV. Procedure

IV.2) Administrative information

IV.2.1) Contract award notice concerning this contract

Notice number: [2017/S 123-249984](#)

Section V. Award of contract/concession

Contract No

2016/S 208-376509

Lot No

1

Title

The NIHR Evaluations, Trials and Studies Coordinating Centre (NETSCC)

V.2) Award of contract/concession

V.2.1) Date of conclusion of the contract/concession award decision:

19 May 2017

V.2.2) Information about tenders

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

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

DUPLICATE - University of Southampton

University Road, Highfield

Southampton

SO17 1BJ

Country

United Kingdom

NUTS code

- UK - United Kingdom

The contractor/concessionaire is an SME

No

V.2.4) Information on value of the contract/lot/concession (at the time of conclusion of the contract;excluding VAT)

Total value of the procurement: £139,320,008.76

Section VI. Complementary information

VI.3) Additional information

The Department intends to re-tender the services at the end of the contract term. The Prior Information Notice can be found here <https://www.find-tender.service.gov.uk/Notice/025178-2024>

VI.4) Procedures for review

VI.4.1) Review body

The High Court

The Strand

London

WC2A 2LL

Country

United Kingdom

Internet address

<https://www.judiciary.uk/courts-and-tribunals/high-court/>

Section VII: Modifications to the contract/concession

VII.1) Description of the procurement after the modifications

VII.1.1) Main CPV code

- 75120000 - Administrative services of agencies

VII.1.2) Additional CPV code(s)

- 98113000 - Services furnished by specialist organisations

VII.1.3) Place of performance

NUTS code

- UK - United Kingdom

Main site or place of performance

United Kingdom

VII.1.4) Description of the procurement:

- Established processes for commissioning R&D within NIHR and DH were set up to promote probity in spending public money and equality of opportunity. NETSCC will be expected to adopt similar standards of commissioning for all its managed programmes. This is an essential requirement and bidders must demonstrate an understanding of the process and the skills required to deliver it which, crucially, includes scientific secretariat skills.

- NETSCC will be required to provide administrative support to all systems and structures used to identify and prioritise research of relevance to those who plan, provide or receive NHS and other health and care services as well as providing systems and processes for research commissioning, monitoring and project management.

- NETSCC will provide scientific secretariat support, under the direction of a Programme Director, to expert advisory committees and will advise on the prioritisation of research proposals and on commissioning decisions.

- NETSCC will be required to make all necessary arrangements for commissioning and other meetings. For example, the maintenance of committee membership lists, the production and distribution of all papers necessary well in advance of meetings, the taking of minutes of meetings (which will include discussions of science and research methodology) and the prompt circulation of accurate minutes following meetings.

- NETSCC will be responsible for the issuing of project and programme contracts (standard contract format) which will be sent for final signature to the DH Science, Research and Evidence Directorate (SRED).
- All projects and programmes will require a detailed timetable with milestones. NETSCC will monitor projects and programmes and will take receipt of regular reports ensuring that researchers keep to the timetable and achieve milestones. This will require a solid understanding of the science as well as strong administrative skills.
- NETSCC will be responsible for forecasting, profiling and reporting on annual budgets from April 1st to March 31st of each of the years covered, reporting quarterly and monitoring monthly.
- Payments to R&D project and research infrastructure contractors are made by DH normally quarterly in arrears. NETSCC will take responsibility for informing SRED when project/ programme contracts have started in order that scheduled payments may commence, and for alerting SRED of any adverse event necessitating suspension of payments.
- NETSCC will be required to set up and run, in liaison with SRED, financially sound and transparent accounting systems. NETSCC will be expected to adopt information management systems that are compatible with systems already in use by other parts of NIHR. NETSCC will provide progress reports, including financial summaries, in respect of the managed programmes as required. Bidders must be able to demonstrate the necessary skills to deliver this aspect of their bid.
- NETSCC will take such steps as are necessary to ensure that accurate, well presented, peer reviewed final reports and executive summaries are forthcoming promptly from all projects funded, and that these reports and summaries are entered into appropriate database and library systems. Specifically, NETSCC will deliver the NIHR Journals Library series and all outputs from NETSCC will be included in that series. Relevant NIHR funded research commissioned through the NIHR Central Commissioning facility will also be included (namely Programme Grants for Applied Research) as well as selected outputs from other funders where there is a shared interest, namely the Medical Research Council's (MRC) Methodology Research Programme.
- NETSCC will, as routine, alert the Department to forthcoming outputs through an outputs notification process, highlighting any outputs considered sensitive. As part of that process, NETSCC will, as a minimum, provide notice and copies of forthcoming publications, including press releases, arising from funded research at least 28 days prior to publication. Contractors will alert the Department immediately to such forthcoming publications and ensure that it receives advance copies as soon as these are available.

- NETSCC will use its best endeavours to ensure, as far as possible, that intellectual property rights (IPR) of value to the NHS are properly protected and managed, and agreements are drawn up to ensure the NHS receives an appropriate share of any earnings from IPR.

VII.1.5) Duration of the contract, framework agreement, dynamic purchasing system or concession

Start date

1 April 2018

End date

31 March 2027

In the case of framework agreements, provide justification for any duration exceeding 4 years:

A 5-year initial term and an option to extend for 4 years due to need for stability and continuity of services.

VII.1.6) Information on value of the contract/lot/concession (excluding VAT)

Total value of the contract/lot/concession:

£203,019,283

VII.1.7) Name and address of the contractor/concessionaire

DUPLICATE - University of Southampton

University Road, Highfield

Southampton

SO17 1BJ

Country

United Kingdom

NUTS code

- UK - United Kingdom

The contractor/concessionaire is an SME

No

VII.2) Information about modifications

VII.2.1) Description of the modifications

Nature and extent of the modifications (with indication of possible earlier changes to the contract):

This modification extends the existing NETSCC contract from 31st March 2025 by 2 years to 31st March 2027.

This modification does not change NETSCC's existing core functions to provide identification, prioritisation, research commissioning and management facilities.

Previous changes to the contract have been made, bringing the current contract value to 141,761,678 GBP (this value excludes this 2-year extension modification.)

VII.2.2) Reasons for modification

Need for additional works, services or supplies by the original contractor/concessionaire.

Description of the economic or technical reasons and the inconvenience or duplication of cost preventing a change of contractor:

The Authority believes that the modification was permitted under Regulation 72(1)(b) of the PCR 2015 (SI 102) due to the following reasons:

- a) the modification was necessary to utilise the option to extend for the final 2 years of the 4-year extension term as permitted in the Contract Award Notice.
- b) a change of contractor could not have been made for economic or technical reasons as such additional services required highly specialised, health and care research management expertise, reliance on extensive, established stakeholder relationships and an up-to-date working knowledge of NIHR strategy, policies and systems.
- c) a change of contractor at this stage would have caused significant inconvenience and substantial duplication of costs as a result of:
 - i) the fragmentation and duplication of existing NIHR research programmes;
 - ii) significant, increased contractual management costs
 - iii) significantly higher admin costs.

VII.2.3) Increase in price

Updated total contract value before the modifications (taking into account possible earlier contract modifications, price adaptations and average inflation)

Value excluding VAT: £141,761,678

Total contract value after the modifications

Value excluding VAT: £203,019,283