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Planning

Test Operations Service - Market Engagement Event

Department for Education

F01: Prior information notice

Prior information only

Notice identifier: 2021/S 000-027122

Procurement identifier (OCID): ocds-h6vhtk-02f15f

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Section I: Contracting authority

I.1) Name and addresses

Department for Education

Sanctuary Buildings, 20, Great Smith Street

London

SW1P 3BT

Email

FAS.Procurement@education.gov.uk

Telephone

+44 03700002288

Country

United Kingdom

NUTS code

UKE32 - Sheffield

Internet address(es)

Main address

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-education>

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

Education

Section II: Object

II.1) Scope of the procurement

II.1.1) Title

Test Operations Service - Market Engagement Event

II.1.2) Main CPV code

- 80000000 - Education and training services

II.1.3) Type of contract

Services

II.1.4) Short description

The Standards and Testing Agency (STA) is an executive agency of the Department for Education which is required to deliver statutory National Curriculum Assessments (NCAs), including Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 assessments. The Test Operations Service project has been launched to seek a Supplier to deliver NCAs on behalf of the STA in England only from the 2025-26 test cycle onwards when the current contract expires.

The purpose of this notice is to notify the market of the STA's intention to undertake pre-procurement market engagement prior to commencing procurement activity to appoint a suitably qualified Supplier to deliver the Test Operations Service.

The Market Engagement Event will consist of an online presentation delivered by the STA, detailing its high-level requirements, and explaining how potential Suppliers may ready themselves for any procurement process that may follow. Information will also be available on the procurement process and timetable, with an open Q&A session for Suppliers to raise any questions. This will be held online on 22 November 2021 at 11:00-12:30.

Following the online presentation, STA is proposing to hold follow up 1:1 sessions with interested Suppliers on weeks commencing 29 November and 6 December 2021. This will provide further opportunity for dialogue with potential Suppliers regarding the requirements, and for Suppliers to meet key members of the project team. 1:1 sessions will be available to book following the presentation.

If you would like to attend the Market Engagement Event, please register an expression of interest on the Jaggaer e-sourcing platform at <https://education.app.jaggaer.com/web/login.html> and follow the "View Opportunities"

link. Suppliers will then need to access the Test Operations Services Market Engagement Event (ssq_175 – Test Operations Service Market Engagement Event) and respond to the question contained in the qualification envelope within the opportunity listing. This must be completed by 12:00 on 18 November 2021 via the Jaggaer e-sourcing portal.

Please note that by attending this session you consent for it to be recorded and made available on the Jaggaer platform.

II.1.5) Estimated total value

Value excluding VAT: £120,000,000

II.1.6) Information about lots

This contract is divided into lots: No

II.2) Description

II.2.2) Additional CPV code(s)

- 80000000 - Education and training services

II.2.3) Place of performance

NUTS codes

- UK - United Kingdom

II.2.4) Description of the procurement

The primary purpose of STA is to provide an effective and robust testing, assessment and moderation system to measure and monitor pupils' progress and attainment between reception and the end of key stage 2 (KS2). STA is responsible for the development and delivery of national curriculum tests and assessments in England, under statutory instruments, on behalf of the Secretary of State for Education. We are regulated by Ofqual for our work on National Curriculum Assessments (NCAs). In a typical school year NCAs are published annually at an individual school level in the School Performance Tables and are an important factor in the parental choice of schools.

The final test cycle in STA's existing contract to deliver NCAs will be in 2024-25, therefore a new contract must be in place to begin delivering from the 2025-26 test cycle onwards. It is anticipated that the contract will be awarded in early 2024.

Service Requirements: The current assessments in scope for the Test Operations Service are the Phonics Screening Check (PSC), end of KS1 NCAs and teacher assessment, end of KS2 NCAs and teacher assessment in English Writing and Science Other assessments which are not in scope of this service are Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA) and Multiplication Tables Check (MTC). The tests are sat by the full cohort of pupils, currently up to 650,000 in 16,500 schools.

For successful delivery of the service, we expect that the Supplier will undertake the following activities (not exhaustive):

1. General

- Overarching management of test operations
- Systems Integration
- Security of test materials
- Provision of data
- Project and Risk management
- Collection of KS2 pupil test information
- Collection of KS2 Teacher Assessment data
- Development and dissemination of guidance, communications and support to schools, markers and other stakeholders throughout the test cycle

2. Print

- Manufacture test materials to schools
- Manufacture KS2 marker materials to KS2 markers

3. Logistics

- Collate and distribute test materials to up to 16,500 schools
- Distribute KS2 marker materials to KS2 markers
- KS2 post-test logistics (collect test scripts from schools, scan and distribute to markers: test scripts/scanned images returned to schools)

- KS2 scanning and matching services

4. Marking and Assessment

- KS2 marker recruitment and management
- KS2 marker training (develop materials and deliver training)
- KS2 on screen marking provision
- KS2 script marking management and mark capture
- Support KS2 test standard setting
- Support maladministration processes

5. Helpdesk

- Helpdesk for markers, schools and other stakeholders
- Activity peaks between May to July each Test Cycle.

The full scope of services to be delivered will be detailed in the Statement of Requirements which will form part of the tender documents.

Indicative volumes will be contained within a Data Room available to tenderers subject to the signing of a Non-Disclosure Agreement.

Proposed commercial model: STA intends to contract with either a Supplier who proposes to offer the whole service (with or without subcontractors) or a consortium of Suppliers who have joined together to offer the whole service. To this end, the Market Engagement Event will also act as a forum for identifying potential consortium partners or potential subcontractors. At the tendering stage a consortium must be either a legal entity or have a lead organisation which is authorised to act on behalf of its members with which STA can contract.

II.3) Estimated date of publication of contract notice

23 August 2022

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

Section VI. Complementary information

VI.3) Additional information

The publication of this notice does not signify the commencement of any procurement process and does not constitute any commitment by STA to undertake any procurement exercise.

In the event that STA might decide to commence any procurement process as contemplated by this notice, a separate notice will be published at the relevant time.

STA is keen to ensure that potential suppliers have as much notice as is possible about the services we wish to procure and this supports our agenda about encouraging engagement with Small and Medium Suppliers.

Disclaimers and conditions: STA retains the right to not procure and this early market engagement event is not binding. Any communication made between DfE and any party in connection with this requirement, shall not be relied upon as constituting a contract, agreement or representation that any contract will necessarily be offered.

STA reserves the right to change without notice any documents and communications, in whole or in part. Under no circumstances shall STA incur any liability in respect of this supporting documentation and STA will not reimburse any costs incurred by any parties in connection with their use of these communications nor in connection with participation at the Early Market Engagement event.

This early market engagement event is suitable for suppliers that have knowledge, capacity and capability and track record to meet the requirements when the competition is published.

The Authority administers all procurements electronically via the Department for Education e-procurement Solution portal (Jaggaer).

No hard copy documents will be issued and all communications with the Authority (including final submission of Tender responses) must be conducted via Jaggaer.

To ensure all communications relating to this procurement are received, potential suppliers must ensure that the point of contact they nominate in the Jaggaer portal is accurate at all times. Access to the Jaggaer portal is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week and 365 days a year anywhere in the world via the internet unless notified otherwise by the Jaggaer portal.