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Tender

High Pressure Vitreous Freezer

University Of Edinburgh

F02: Contract notice
Notice identifier: 2025/S 000-030174
Procurement identifier (OCID): ocds-h6vhtk-054368
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Section I: Contracting authority

I.1) Name and addresses

University Of Edinburgh

Charles Stewart House, 9-16 Chambers Street

Edinburgh

EH1 1HT

Email

jpike2@ed.ac.uk

Telephone

+44 1316502759

Country

United Kingdom

NUTS code

UKM75 - Edinburgh, City of

Internet address(es)

Main address

http://www.ed.ac.uk

Buyer's address

https://www.publiccontractsscotland.gov.uk/search/Search_AuthProfile.aspx?ID=AA00107

I.2) Information about joint procurement

The contract is awarded by a central purchasing body

I.3) Communication

The procurement documents are available for unrestricted and full direct access, free of charge, at

https://www.publictendersscotland.publiccontractsscotland.gov.uk/

Additional information can be obtained from the above-mentioned address

Tenders or requests to participate must be submitted electronically via

https://www.publictendersscotland.publiccontractsscotland.gov.uk/

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

High Pressure Vitreous Freezer

Reference number

EC1055

II.1.2) Main CPV code

- 42513100 - Freezing equipment

II.1.3) Type of contract

Supplies

II.1.4) Short description

The School of Physics and Astronomy has a requirement for a ‘High Pressure Vitreous Freezer’ (HPVF); this is a device that freezes samples to extreme low temperature at an exceptionally high rate to essentially ‘freeze a sample in time’. If a sample is cooled at a slower rate ice may form within/on fragile samples (for example cells), which would swell/crystalise and destroy the nano/microstructure of the sample. Freezing at an exceptionally high rate freezes the sample faster than ice can form, avoiding this issue.

This machine will be used for experimental sample preparation.

II.1.5) Estimated total value

Value excluding VAT: £361,000

II.1.6) Information about lots

This contract is divided into lots: No

II.2) Description

II.2.2) Additional CPV code(s)

- 38600000 - Optical instruments

- 42000000 - Industrial machinery

II.2.3) Place of performance

NUTS codes

- UKM75 - Edinburgh, City of

Main site or place of performance

City of Edinburgh

II.2.4) Description of the procurement

DETAILED SPECIFICATION

ESSENTIAL:

- The ability to vitreously freeze small volumes (specimen carriers described later) of soft and liquid samples by using a combination of high pressures and liquid nitrogen

- Must achieve a minimum cooling rate of 2000K/s

- Must be able to exert pressures on the sample in the range of 1900 – 2200 bar during the freezing process to inhibit ice nucleation

- Use 3mm and 6mm diameter planchette specimen carriers to hold the sample during freezing

- Output freezing parameters after the freezing process

- Vitreously freeze non-biological and biological samples up to 200 µm thick

- Use mains electricity in the lab and conform to UK/CE electrical safety standards.

- Installation, commissioning and testing of the equipment.

- User Training provided.

- Access requirements for the lab: Fire exit width: 139cm. Lab door width: 130cm(W) * 210cm(H); Corridor: 159cm(min width); Weight: Passes through corridors with areas of possible max weight “not exceeding 580kg per square metre”.

- 1 year manufacturer’s parts and labour warranty

- Basic level of service contract(extended warranty) + Support helpline and troubleshooting for 3 years post initial warranty period.

- Device should be reliable and have a long supported life (ideally not less than 10 years)

- Product must fit within available lab space; floor plan max area 2m x 2m

OPTIONAL/DESIRABLE:

- The ability to also use other types of “standard” HPF specimen carriers, such as copper tubes (0.4-0.9 mm diameter), sapphire disks, other, etc.

- Able to fit into or Retrofittable into a Correlative Light-Electron Microscopy (CLEM) workflow and/or employ the “Waffle” method for a cryo on-grid thinning workflow. Live cell imaging is not needed (freezing sample seconds after an “event”) as part of the initial requirement. In the future we may want to freeze a sample and observe it with light and electron microscopy but freezing the sample at a specific time is likely not needed.

- Reliable stock of consumables/specimen carriers for purchase

AWARD

The University anticipates initially awarding for;

- Device manufactured, delivered into the lab, installed, commissioned and tested by supplier; to be in a fully operable state

- User training

- 1 year full parts and labour warranty

- Parts and labour extended service for 3 years post warranty

The University welcomes suppliers providing details of their enhanced service offerings for comparison.

INSTALLATION SURVEY:

- Initial measurements have been provided for entrance ways and available floor space above but these are approximations

- The University will take no liability if a supplier subsequently discovers they cannot deliver or install their solution without changes to the building fabric; in such circumstances the University may at its discretion cancel the award and award to the next-

ranked supplier

- Giving reasonable notice (and subject to any submission deadline) suppliers may request the opportunity to conduct a single site survey prior to submitting their bid and/or finalising the contract post-award, providing the University and Supplier can agree a mutually convenient date and time. We encourage suppliers to take this opportunity.

MANUFACTURING DEADLINE

Unless otherwise agreed or offered by the University suppliers must meet a deadline to manufacture and deliver the winning machine, and install+ commission it, by no later than end June 2026.

II.2.5) Award criteria

Quality criterion - Name: Technical requirement / Weighting: 50

Cost criterion - Name: Total cost for initial term / Weighting: 50

II.2.6) Estimated value

Value excluding VAT: £361,000

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

Duration in months

96

This contract is subject to renewal

Yes

Description of renewals

Duration estimate reflects; Initial term consisting of 1 year warranty and 3 years extended service (4 years) + the option to extend service for a further 4 years, to give a total potential term of approximately 8 years post-device delivery

II.2.9) Information about the limits on the number of candidates to be invited

Envisaged number of candidates: 3

Objective criteria for choosing the limited number of candidates:

We are utilising our right to have a procedure where the number of candidates may be reduced phase by phase. The requirement, questions to answer and scoring methodology will be set out in the procurement documentation for each phase.

This process consists of a PQQ, a two-stage ITT, and a negotiation. This notice constitutes an invitation for interested suppliers to Pre-qualify AND submit their Invitation to Tender Bid for ITT stage 1 simultaneously.

The first ITT stage is intentionally light-touch to quickly confirm Tenderers who meet the requirement and cost envelope the University is seeking. ITT stage two may be more detailed, commensurate with a normal ITT process. The University at its discretion may elect to not undertake a second ITT stage but proceed immediately to negotiation with down-selected suppliers.

Submissions should be via the PCST system. For avoidance of doubt, the ‘Qualification’ envelope shall be a Tenderers qualification stage, and the ‘Technical’ and ‘Commercial’ stage shall be their ITT stage 1.

In the event a Tenderer does not pass Qualification the University may not review their ITT Stage 1 bid and may reject their tender.

The details and terms of ITT Stage 1 are set out in the procurement documentation.

II.2.10) Information about variants

Variants will be accepted: No

II.2.11) Information about options

Options: Yes

Description of options

Purchase of sundries, additional service and machine extensions may be undertaken with the winning bidder via the Negotiated Procedure Without Prior Call For Competition

II.2.13) Information about European Union Funds

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

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Section III. Legal, economic, financial and technical information

III.1) Conditions for participation

III.1.2) Economic and financial standing

Selection criteria as stated in the procurement documents

III.1.3) Technical and professional ability

Selection criteria as stated in the procurement documents

III.2) Conditions related to the contract

III.2.2) Contract performance conditions

The contract shall be negotiated with the bidders.

The expectation is that the supplier delivers in line with time, cost and quality expectations

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Section IV. Procedure

IV.1) Description

IV.1.1) Type of procedure

Competitive procedure with negotiation

IV.1.4) Information about reduction of the number of solutions or tenders during negotiation or dialogue

Recourse to staged procedure to gradually reduce the number of solutions to be discussed or tenders to be negotiated

IV.1.5) Information about negotiation

The contracting authority reserves the right to award the contract on the basis of the initial tenders without conducting negotiations

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

The procurement is covered by the Government Procurement Agreement: Yes

IV.2) Administrative information

IV.2.2) Time limit for receipt of tenders or requests to participate

Date

7 July 2025

Local time

4:00pm

IV.2.3) Estimated date of dispatch of invitations to tender or to participate to selected candidates

25 July 2025

IV.2.4) Languages in which tenders or requests to participate may be submitted

English

IV.2.6) Minimum time frame during which the tenderer must maintain the tender

Duration in months: 4 (from the date stated for receipt of tender)

Section VI. Complementary information

VI.1) Information about recurrence

This is a recurrent procurement: No

VI.2) Information about electronic workflows

Electronic ordering will be used

Electronic invoicing will be accepted

Electronic payment will be used

VI.3) Additional information

Invitation to Tender date on notice represents anticipated date for ITT Stage 2. For avoidance of doubt this notice constitutes invitation to ITT Stage 1 in addition to qualification

The buyer is using PCS-Tender to conduct this ITT exercise. The Project code is 29401. For more information see:
http://www.publiccontractsscotland.gov.uk/info/InfoCentre.aspx?ID=2343

Community benefits are included in this requirement. For more information see:
https://www.gov.scot/policies/public-sector-procurement/community-benefits-in-procurement/

A summary of the expected community benefits has been provided as follows:

Introduction

It is the policy of the University of Edinburgh, in line with Scottish Government guidance, to encourage our supply chain to be making a positive social impact, in addition to the benefits they bring to the University and Scottish economy through providing goods and services. In this section suppliers are asked to confirm what commitments they make in respect of Sustainability and Community benefits.

A combined question is asked on sustainability and community benefits in the procurement documentation; evaluation guidance which will be followed is provided. Suppliers have flexibility to highlight any sustainability and community benefit opportunities they offer or will offer during the duration of the contract. These benefits should be in Scotland, preferably Edinburgh and South-East Scotland.

Edinburgh ESES

If a supplier does not currently provide any community benefits in the region of Edinburgh and East Scotland, an easy way to do this is via ESES Communities. This is a website funded by the Edinburgh&South East Scotland City Region Deal, which provides a public portal of pre-vetted social projects which businesses can choose to invest in. Suppliers can submit for an opportunity and when accepted will be advertised as a backer to the project. Opportunities may consist of simple donations (e.g. for school uniforms for impoverished children) or contribution of skills (such as providing IT training for the elderly).

The website can be found at:

https://www.esescommunities.org/

(SC Ref:800799)

VI.4) Procedures for review

VI.4.1) Review body

Edinburgh Sheriff Court

Edinburgh

Country

United Kingdom