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Planning

Communications Research Framework

DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS (Defra Network eTendering Portal)

F01: Prior information notice

Prior information only

Notice identifier: 2024/S 000-037933

Procurement identifier (OCID): ocds-h6vhtk-04be43

Published 24 November 2024, 5:55pm

Section I: Contracting authority

I.1) Name and addresses

DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS (Defra Network eTendering Portal)

Seacole Building, 2 Marsham Street

London

SW1P 4DF

Contact

katie thompson

Email

katie.thompson@defra.gov.uk

Country

United Kingdom

Region code

UK - United Kingdom

Internet address(es)

Main address

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-environment-food-rural-affairs>

Buyer's address

<https://defra-family.force.com/s/Welcome>

I.2) Information about joint procurement

The contract is awarded by a central purchasing body

I.3) Communication

Additional information can be obtained from the above-mentioned address

Electronic communication requires the use of tools and devices that are not generally available. Unrestricted and full direct access to these tools and devices is possible, free of charge, at

<https://atamis-9529.my.site.com/s/Welcome>

I.4) Type of the contracting authority

Ministry or any other national or federal authority

I.5) Main activity

Environment

Section II: Object

II.1) Scope of the procurement

II.1.1) Title

Communications Research Framework

II.1.2) Main CPV code

- 79300000 - Market and economic research; polling and statistics

II.1.3) Type of contract

Services

II.1.4) Short description

This procurement will establish a Framework to deliver research for Defra Group Communications Directorate.

The Framework will be for an initial 24-month period with an option to extend for up to 2 x 12-month extensions (2 + 1 + 1 term), subject to budget availability and service delivery . The maximum Framework value is £1.5 million exclusive of VAT. This is a maximum possible spend for all research commissioned for the duration of the Framework and is not a guaranteed spend.

Research is central to Defra Group Communications Directorate. It allows us to better understand our audiences, exploring attitudes, preferred communications channels, and testing the resonance of potential messages/ creatives. It allows communications teams across the Directorate to tailor messaging and strategies to effectively reach and influence our audiences. Research is also used to measure the impact of communications against defined objectives, incorporating both low/no cost activity as well as paid-for marketing campaigns.

The tender will be broken down into three distinct Lots, split by research methodology. We require a supplier for each Lot who can deliver communications research, often at pace. Research projects commissioned under each Lot will vary in size and requirements for outputs. We work with a wide range of audiences in the UK and, for Lots 1 and 2, there is the potential of working internationally.

II.1.5) Estimated total value

Value excluding VAT: £1,500,000

II.1.6) Information about lots

This contract is divided into lots: Yes

II.2) Description

II.2.1) Title

Lot 1 - Qualitative Research

Lot No

Lot 1

II.2.2) Additional CPV code(s)

- 79342000 - Marketing services

II.2.3) Place of performance

NUTS codes

- UK - United Kingdom

II.2.4) Description of the procurement

This Lot requires a supplier to utilise qualitative research approaches to inform our communications, often at pace. We need to be able to efficiently commission qualitative research to generate a deeper understanding of our audiences, including most appropriate channels, language and tone when communicating with them on specific Defra policies, announcements and campaigns. Qualitative research is also central to our ability to test messaging and visual assets with audiences to inform and improve communications strategies and targeting.

A central function of this Lot will be the delivery of quarterly focus groups. These groups will comprise of both regular, tracking insight and inform our communications response to emerging priorities or challenges, including narrative and message testing. Together with our quarterly public attitudes' tracker survey, this provides important, regular insight into public perceptions of our priority issues with value across the Communications Directorate. We anticipate that each wave will comprise of four, online focus groups with a general public audience.

The winning Contractor should have the experience and expertise to act as a strategic partner to the Directorate. This includes identifying key strategic insights from research as well as tangible implications and recommendations for our communications strategies,

messages and visual assets.

The winning Contractor should be able to recommend a suitable methodology for each requirement under this Lot and be able to provide guidance on the pros and cons of different options including impact on speed of delivery versus robustness of results. Methodologies will vary on a project-by-project basis but are likely to predominantly include the following. Further, the Directorate will be open to hearing suggestions for additional, innovative methodologies from the winning Contractor for this Lot if they will further support the delivery of insight to inform our communications.

- Online, telephone or face-to-face depth interviews
- Online or face-to-face focus groups or mini focus groups
- Online communities or digital ethnography
- Co-creation, including workshops

Bidders should be able to effectively sample and recruit participants to participate in qualitative research across all the key audiences outlined in Section 5 (Scope of the Requirement).

Requirements will vary on a project-by-project basis. They are likely to include:

- A short proposal note. This should outline the Contractor's understanding of the project context and objectives, recommended research approach, proposed sample specification and recruitment strategy, a project timeline, and a breakdown of costs

- A kick-off meeting to confirm approach, sample specification and timings with the Directorate

- Design of research materials, allowing plenty of scope for the Directorate to feed into and shape materials

- Recruitment and fieldwork

- Thematic analysis of primary data. The Contractor should also proactively look for ways to elevate analysis to improve outputs (for example, utilising external sources to contextualise research findings, or using behavioural frameworks where this would improve the impact of our communications)

- Interim / topline findings note

- Full PowerPoint report with accompanying debrief. The Contractor should ensure final outputs are concise, easily navigable, have a clear narrative, identify key insights, and include strategic implications and recommendations for our communications. They should also seek to bring to life the views of research participants (for example, through the use of verbatim quotes)

Summary reports or additional, creative outputs

II.2) Description

II.2.1) Title

Lot 2 -Quantitative Research

Lot No

Lot 2

II.2.2) Additional CPV code(s)

- 79342000 - Marketing services

II.2.3) Place of performance

NUTS codes

- UK - United Kingdom

II.2.4) Description of the procurement

This Lot requires a supplier to utilise quantitative research approaches to inform and evaluate our communications, often at pace. We need to be able to efficiently commission quantitative research to support our understanding of key audiences as well as to measure the impact of our communications.

The winning Contractor should have the experience and expertise to act as a strategic partner to the Directorate. This includes identifying key strategic insights from research as well as tangible implications and recommendations for our communications strategies.

The winning Contractor should be able to recommend a suitable methodology for each requirement under this Lot and be able to provide guidance on the pros and cons of different options including impact on speed of delivery versus robustness of results. Methodologies will vary on a project-by-project basis but are likely to predominantly include the following. Further, the Directorate will be open to hearing suggestions for additional, innovative methodologies from the winning Contractor for this Lot if they will further support the delivery of insight.

Online, telephone or face-to-face surveys

Statistical analysis (for example, Segmentations, Key Drivers Analysis, MaxDiff)

There may also be occasions where we require the successful Contractor for this Lot to conduct a small amount of qualitative interviews (for example, to inform questionnaire design / cognitive testing or to deepen understanding of specific survey results).

Bidders should be able to effectively sample participants across all the key audiences outlined in Section 5 (Scope of the Requirement).

Requirements will vary on a project-by-project basis. They are likely to include:

A short proposal note. This should outline the Contractor's understanding of the project context and objectives, recommended research approach, proposed sampling approach, a project timeline, and a breakdown of costs

A kick-off meeting to confirm approach, sampling and timings with the Directorate

Design of survey questionnaire, allowing plenty of scope for the Directorate to feed into and shape materials

Fieldwork and data collection

Weighted data tables with statistical significance testing and relevant cross breaks

Requirements for analysis and outputs will vary on a project-by-project basis. For some projects we will only require delivery of data tables to conduct analysis in-house, whilst for others we may include the following:

Data analysis. The Contractor should also proactively look for ways to elevate analysis to improve outputs (for example, utilising external sources to contextualise research findings, or using behavioural frameworks where this would improve the impact of our communications)

Interim / topline findings note

Full PowerPoint report with charted results and accompanying debrief. The Contractor should ensure final outputs are concise, easily navigable, have a clear narrative, identify key insights, and include strategic implications and recommendations for our communications.

Summary reports or additional, creative outputs

II.2) Description

II.2.1) Title

Lot 3 - Public Polling

Lot No

Lot 3

II.2.2) Additional CPV code(s)

- 79300000 - Market and economic research; polling and statistics

II.2.3) Place of performance

NUTS codes

- UK - United Kingdom

II.2.4) Description of the procurement

We need to be able to efficiently conduct public polling across the UK to measure public awareness of and attitudes to current policy areas, track uptake of certain behaviours, and explore attitudes to key trade-offs or tensions in environmental policy. Polling will cover the full Defra brief and be conducted on behalf of Defra Group.

A central function of this Lot will be the delivery of a public attitudes' tracker survey each quarter. The survey will comprise of regular, tracker questions with the option to include additional, ad hoc questions to provide rapid data on emerging priorities or challenges. We will also want to include a number of demographic and media consumption questions, potentially with the option to link to relevant, external datasets for more nuanced information. We anticipate that each wave of the tracker will be around 15 minutes in length, and we would like to achieve a minimum, nationally representative sample of 2,000 UK adults.

Beyond the quarterly tracker, we may also require st

II.3) Estimated date of publication of contract notice

25 March 2025

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