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Planning

Rail Planning Software

NORTHERN TRAINS LIMITED

UK2: Preliminary market engagement notice - Procurement Act 2023 - [view information about notice types](#)

Notice identifier: 2025/S 000-038215

Procurement identifier (OCID): ocds-h6vhtk-055b13

Published 8 July 2025, 12:24pm

Scope

Description

Northern Trains Limited has a requirement to replace its existing service planning software by March 2027 due to the current product reaching end of support at that time. Northern are therefore looking to engage the supply market to understand the available solutions currently deployed in similar organisations.

The proposed solution should take into account the complex nature of Northern's extensive network:

- 2,500 services run per day
- 474 stations
- 345 trains
- 3,158km of route
- 2000 drivers

- 1500 conductors
- Shared routes with other Train Operating Companies

Northern will be looking to procure a solution that enables the following functionality:

- Create and manage timetables through to submission of bid to Network Rail
- Consume information in a range of industry standard formats such as reports, dashboards and visualisations.
- Report and manage the availability and allocation of units
- Create and manage crew diagrams
- Validate timetables plans and diagrams
- Provide maximum crew coverage while adhering to rules, including union terms and conditions and legal requirements
- Generate and exchange information in a range of formats for download or direct exchange with existing systems.
- Maintain an audit of access and changes to system records.

Northern are also keen to explore additional capabilities within the marketplace that would offer the following enhancements to the solution (the following list is non-exhaustive and Suppliers are encouraged to demonstrate any functionality not listed that would complement the solution based on the requirements above):

- Automated optimisation of timetables, crew and unit allocation.
- Scenario modelling and other forecasting.
- Functionality to support Northern in better understanding the risks and vulnerabilities of timetables.
- Internal and external collaboration.
- Provide remote capability via mobile platforms.

Total value (estimated)

- £11,000,000 excluding VAT
- £13,200,000 including VAT

Above the relevant threshold

Contract dates (estimated)

- 1 February 2026 to 31 January 2032
- Possible extension to 31 January 2037
- 11 years

Main procurement category

Services

CPV classifications

- 48300000 - Document creation, drawing, imaging, scheduling and productivity software package
- 72200000 - Software programming and consultancy services

Contract locations

- UKC - North East (England)
- UKD - North West (England)

- UKE - Yorkshire and the Humber

Engagement

Engagement deadline

29 July 2025

Engagement process description

Northern invites any Suppliers who substantially meet the system functionality detailed to register their interest in attending a briefing call hosted by the Project Team & Procurement Manager to discuss the requirements and understand the suppliers solution capability.

Briefing calls for the weeks commencing 14/07/2025 & 28/07/2025 have been pre-scheduled and will be offered to Suppliers on a first come first serve basis.

Following these sessions, if the Suppliers are interested in tendering for this opportunity they will be invited to send an expression of interest to Northern Trains Limited (details to follow).

In the first instance, should Suppliers wish to partake in the briefing calls please send an expression of interest to Alex Ashman (alexander.ashman@northernrailway.co.uk) along with a summary of the system capabilities (i.e Product fact sheet) and should the Project team assess that the functionality is comparable to the requirements we will share a list of times for the briefing calls to be selected followed by an invitation. Expressions of interest to be submitted by 2.00pm BST Friday 11/07/2025.

Submission

Publication date of tender notice (estimated)

13 August 2025

Procedure

Special regime

Utilities

Contracting authority

NORTHERN TRAINS LIMITED

- Companies House: 03076444
- Public Procurement Organisation Number: PZCJ-2164-HJQZ

George Stephenson House

York

YO1 6JT

United Kingdom

Email: procurement@northernrailway.co.uk

Website: <https://www.northernrailway.co.uk/>

Region: UKE21 - York

Organisation type: Public authority - central government