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Contract

Provision of the Nuclear Innovation and Research Office (NIRO)

Department for Energy Security & Net Zero

UK7: Contract details notice - Procurement Act 2023 - [view information about notice types](#)

Notice identifier: 2025/S 000-052871

Procurement identifier (OCID): ocds-h6vhtk-058faf ([view related notices](#))

Published 1 September 2025, 3:10pm

Scope

Description

NIRO provides independent strategic and technical advice to Government that will de-risk investment, inform policy, and enable maximum value for money to the UK taxpayer. NIRO works in partnership with NIRAB to advise on the research and innovation needed for nuclear energy to play a significant role in the UK's future low carbon and secure energy mix while creating the environment for UK nuclear industry to contribute significantly to our economy.

Contract 1. Provision of the Nuclear Innovation and Research Office (NIRO)

Supplier

- United Kingdom National Nuclear Laboratory Ltd

Contract value

- £1,900,000 excluding VAT
- £2,280,000 including VAT

Above the relevant threshold

Date signed

5 August 2025

Contract dates

- 1 September 2025 to 31 March 2026
- 7 months

Main procurement category

Services

CPV classifications

- 73000000 - Research and development services and related consultancy services

Contract locations

- UK - United Kingdom

Other information

Conflicts assessment prepared/revised

Yes

Procedure

Procedure type

Direct award

Direct award justification

Single supplier - technical reasons

We would therefore like to relet this contract as a Single Tender Action, for the following reasons:

- NIRO has built up a strong reputation amongst end users in DESNZ - people now understand the service and what it offers, and trust NIRO to deliver. It is also respected by the wider nuclear industry as an objective party who can convene groups with different views to encourage collaboration.
- NIRO has recruited a strong team of experts. NNL will need to end the secondments of these people when the contract comes to an end in March, if we do not have certainty about the next contract. DESNZ and NNL would lose credibility with industry partners.
- NNL provide the service at cost - they do not charge profit but reclaim a proportion of

their overhead costs for hosting the office (IT, central support costs etc). NNL's salary remit is approved by DESNZ Ministers in line with Cabinet Office controls.

- Much of what NIRO delivers is related to security / classified issues (e.g work relating to plutonium). Several team members are DV cleared and NNL IT can process sensitive nuclear information. NIRO advise on policy in development when requirements can be unclear and can't be released publicly.
- We have a seat on the NNL Board, and DESNZ Ministers approve NNL's salary remit - so we have good oversight of costs, and levers of influence. Both organisations have a desire to make this contract a success on a collaborative basis - we would not have the same levers with a member of the supply chain.
- We have developed a set of ethical barriers with NNL to give assurance that NIRO is separate from NNL's commercial operations. This was audited recently and practices found to be strong. Of 10 Findings, six were found to be green, and four amber with recommendations for strengthening practices. The recommendations have all been acted upon.
- We consider that competition is absent for technical reasons and that there is therefore a case for relying on the exemption under regulation 32(2)(b)(ii) of the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 (competition is absent for technical reasons).

Supplier

United Kingdom National Nuclear Laboratory Ltd

- Companies House: 03857752

Chadwick House Warrington Road, Birchwood Park

Warrington

WA3 6AE

United Kingdom

Email: nnl.procurement@uknnl.com

Region: UKD61 - Warrington

Small or medium-sized enterprise (SME): No

Voluntary, community or social enterprise (VCSE): No

Supported employment provider: No

Public service mutual: No

Contract 1. Provision of the Nuclear Innovation and Research Office (NIRO)

Contracting authority

Department for Energy Security & Net Zero

- Public Procurement Organisation Number: PDHQ-2163-WYMH

55 Whitehall

London

SW1A 2HP

United Kingdom

Email: commercialexcellence@ics.gov.uk

Region: UKI32 - Westminster

Organisation type: Public authority - central government

