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Tender

Provision of Ocean Bottom Seismometers

National Oceanography Centre

UK4: Tender notice - Procurement Act 2023 - [view information about notice types](#)

Notice identifier: 2025/S 000-054447

Procurement identifier (OCID): ocids-h6vhtk-059555

Published 5 September 2025, 5:37pm

Changes to notice

This notice has been edited. The [previous version](#) is still available.

Due to e-sender restrictions a description for the prior market engagement was not posted and the incorrect choice of "No" to has market testing taken place was not selected. This has been corrected and the relevant description posted.

It was also automatically noted that this relates to a Government Procurement Agreement (GPA) it does not and the change has been made.

Scope

Reference

NOC P00487

Description

The National Oceanography Centre (NOC) is running this competition as an open procedure under section 20(2)(a) of the Procurement Act 2023. This means any interested and qualified supplier may submit a tender. The process is fully transparent and follows the requirements of the Act and associated Regulations. All tender documentation, including this specification, is available through the MyTenders portal.

Tenders will be evaluated in line with the methodology set out in the Invitation to Tender, following an open and transparent process that includes compliance checks to ensure all mandatory requirements and pass/fail criteria are met (with non-compliant bids excluded), scoring of qualitative and technical responses against published weighted criteria (with minimum pass marks where specified), pricing evaluation using the stated formula, and overall ranking based on the combined quality and price scores to identify the most economically advantageous tender; the preferred bidder will then undergo due diligence checks such as insurance and financial verification before contract award, and a mandatory standstill period will apply prior to contract conclusion to ensure fairness and compliance with the Procurement Act 2023.

NOC seeks the supply and delivery of a pool of broadband OBS systems for deep-ocean research, together with one complete deck communications and seabed-ranging system, plus commissioning support, documentation and warranties. The systems will underpin geohazard monitoring, seismic and acoustic studies, and wider marine science. Pricing must be on a fully delivered basis. Delivery must be completed by 31 March 2026 to enable mobilisation for Spring 2026 expeditions. The OBS pool will be deployed worldwide, including depths of at least 6,000 m, across a broad temperature range. Instruments must support long-duration deployments and operate reliably on varied seabed conditions, including slopes, for both passive and active seismic studies.

Suppliers shall provide fully delivered pricing for three options detailed in Schedule 6. Each option must include the deck communications system. Suppliers may also provide informational pricing for the purchase or rental of a single OBS unit for future planning; these figures will not be evaluated.

Consumables, documentation and commissioning

To ensure immediate readiness for the first deployments, pricing is to include one full set of deployment consumables per instrument, such as anchors, burn wire (where

applicable) and batteries sufficient for an initial extended deployment period. The supplier will deliver complete and current manuals covering equipment details, assembly, deployment, recovery, data workflows and safety considerations, and will provide commissioning support to bring the pool into service.

Warranties, servicing and updates

As a minimum, the supplier will warrant electronic and datalogger components and sensors and mechanical elements for at least 12 months and include any manufacturer advised servicing or calibrations for the seismometer within the first five years of ownership. To protect the investment and maintain scientific integrity over time, the supplier will also provide future compatible firmware, software and data processing updates as part of the contract.

Logistics and timetable

All equipment including OBS units, deck communications system, consumables and documentation must be delivered no later than 31 March 2026 to enable pre cruise testing, training and mobilisation for the Spring 2026 expedition window. Pricing must cover delivery to NOC and all associated logistics necessary to place the equipment into our custody, ready for commissioning activities.

Total value (estimated)

- £360,000 excluding VAT
- £450,000 including VAT

Above the relevant threshold

Contract dates (estimated)

- 24 October 2025 to 31 March 2027
- Possible extension to 31 March 2030
- 4 years, 5 months, 8 days

Description of possible extension:

Extended warranty

A year-on-year renewable warranty is available for up to four additional years beyond the initial 12-month warranty period. This extension ensures long-term support, predictable maintenance costs and continued access to servicing and updates. Each extension can be exercised annually at the buyer's discretion, providing flexibility to align with budget cycles and asset management plans. These extensions also cover the optional uptakes covered within the ITT.

Options

The right to additional purchases while the contract is valid.

Single-unit purchase

Informational pricing is requested for the purchase of one additional OBS unit. This option provides flexibility for incremental expansion if additional funding becomes available after contract award. It also serves as a contingency measure if an instrument is lost or damaged and needs to be replaced to maintain operational continuity.

Single-unit rental

Informational pricing is requested for the rental of one OBS unit. This option offers a short-term solution if manufacturing lead times or logistics threaten the Spring 2026 deployment schedule. It can also be used to temporarily increase the instrument pool for specific campaigns without committing to a full capital purchase.

Extended warranty

A year-on-year renewable warranty is available for up to four additional years beyond the initial 12-month warranty period. This extension ensures long-term support, predictable maintenance costs and continued access to servicing and updates. Each extension can be exercised annually at the buyer's discretion, providing flexibility to align with budget cycles and asset management plans.

The Authority reserves the right to consider refurbished OBS units as part of future capability requirements. Should the market demonstrate that refurbished units offer a viable value-for-money solution, the Authority may initiate a separate procurement process or modify the awarded contract, subject to regulatory compliance.

The Authority may consider contract modification under Section 74(1)(a) and Schedule 8(1) & (5) of the Procurement Act 2023 to include additional or refurbished OBS units, should the successful supplier be capable of supplying them and should such a need arise post-award.

Main procurement category

Goods

CPV classifications

- 38290000 - Surveying, hydrographic, oceanographic and hydrological instruments and appliances

Contract locations

- UKJ32 - Southampton

Participation

Legal and financial capacity conditions of participation

Please see tender documentation: PSQ

Technical ability conditions of participation

Please see tender documentation PSQ and Mandatory Technical Criteria (Schedule 8)

Particular suitability

Small and medium-sized enterprises (SME)

Submission

Enquiry deadline

17 September 2025, 12:00pm

Tender submission deadline

30 September 2025, 12:00pm

Submission address and any special instructions

All tenders must be submitted electronically via www.mytenders.co.uk. Submissions by email or post will not be accepted.

Tenders may be submitted electronically

Yes

Languages that may be used for submission

English

Award decision date (estimated)

3 October 2025

Recurring procurement

Publication date of next tender notice (estimated): 5 September 2029

Award criteria

| Name | Description | Type |
|--|---|---------|
| OPTION 1: Purchase of 4 OBS Units | | Price |
| OPTION 2: Purchase of 5 OBS Units | | Price |
| OPTION 3: Purchase of 6 OBS Units | | Price |
| Technical Sub-Criteria 1. Instrument | Please note that a full break down of sub criteria is available in (Schedule 6) along with evaluation criteria and weightings | Quality |
| Technical Sub-Criteria 2. Communication & Recovery | Please note that a full break down of sub criteria is available in (Schedule 6) along with evaluation criteria and weightings | Quality |
| Technical Sub-Criteria 3. Sensors | Please note that a full break down of sub criteria is available in (Schedule 6) along with evaluation criteria and weightings | Quality |
| Technical Sub Criteria 4. Datalogger | Please note that a full break down of sub criteria is available in (Schedule 6) along with evaluation criteria and weightings | Quality |

Weighting description

The contract will be awarded to the most economically advantageous tender based on a combination of price and quality. Commercial evaluation considers fully delivered pricing for the purchase options listed below. Please note that Technical Criteria 5 (Warranty and Servicing) and 6 (Delivery & Instructions) are not shown with percentage weightings because they are assessed on a pass/fail basis only. All other technical elements carry the weightings indicated, and minimum pass/fail thresholds apply to ensure baseline capability and risk mitigation.

Commercial:

OPTION 1: Purchase of 4 OBS Units 10.00%

OPTION 2: Purchase of 4 OBS Units 20.00%

OPTION 3: Purchase of 4 OBS Units 30.00%

Quality & Technical Criteria

1. Instrument Pass / Fail & 10%
2. Communication and recovery Pass / Fail & 14%
3. Sensors Pass / Fail and 14%
4. Datalogger Pass / Fail & 2%
5. Warranty and servicing Pass / Fail
6. Delivery & Instructions Pass / Fail

Other information

Payment terms

Milestone payment plan in agreement with successful supplier. Minimum payment term of 30 days from test and acceptance and invoice will be applied.

Description of risks to contract performance

Failure to deliver the proposed and contracted solution by the mandatory delivery date of the 31.03.2026.

Failure of any mandatory technical requirements.

Conflicts assessment prepared/revised

Yes

Procedure

Procedure type

Open procedure

Justification for not publishing a preliminary market engagement notice

Preliminary market engagement was carried out to inform requirements and funding applications. Initial engagement supported our ARIA grant and internal approvals by confirming technical feasibility, indicative costs, lead times and market capabilities. A formal notice was not published because these activities were solely for funding applications, not to initiate competition. The earlier rental approach would have been delivered via a collaboration contract outside of the scope of the Procurement Act.

Documents

Associated tender documents

https://www.mytenders.co.uk/Authority/NoticeBuilder/NoticeBuilder_FileDownload.aspx?id=610770

Please see attached the ITT containing all pertinent references and tender details.
Associated schedules can be accessed on our e-tendering Portal www.mytenders.co.uk

https://www.mytenders.co.uk/Authority/NoticeBuilder/NoticeBuilder_FileDownload.aspx?id=610766

Please see attached the PSQ. Further Documents can be accessed on our e-tendering Portal www.mytenders.co.uk

Contracting authority

National Oceanography Centre

- Public Procurement Organisation Number: PYLV-3456-PMCQ

European Way

Southampton

SO14 3ZH

United Kingdom

Contact name: George-Oliver Matthews

Email: tenders@noc.ac.uk

Website: <http://www.noc.ac.uk>

Region: UKJ32 - Southampton

Organisation type: Public authority - sub-central government