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Tender

Customer Research and Engagement

NORTHUMBRIAN WATER LIMITED

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

Notice identifier: 2025/S 000-074473

Procurement identifier (OCID): ocds-h6vhtk-05e2a8

Published 17 November 2025, 3:29pm

Scope

Reference

NW3023

Description

NWL are looking for a supplier who can provide customer research and engagement and supporting consultancy services. In main this is to support Price Review 2029 (PR29). The plan will cover the services we will provide from 2030. The contract term will be four years, starting on the 1 April 2026.

Commercial tool

Establishes a framework

Total value (estimated)

- £1,000,000 excluding VAT
- £1,200,000 including VAT

Above the relevant threshold

Contract dates (estimated)

- 1 April 2026 to 31 March 2030
- 4 years

Main procurement category

Services

CPV classifications

- 73110000 - Research services

Contract locations

- UKC - North East (England)
- UKH1 - East Anglia
- UKH3 - Essex

Framework

Maximum number of suppliers

6

Maximum percentage fee charged to suppliers

0%

Framework operation description

It is then our intention to have 6 vendors on this framework contract, if a individual spend is anticipated to be £5,000 or more we will send out a request for a detailed proposal.

Award method when using the framework

With competition

Contracting authorities that may use the framework

Establishing party only

Participation

Particular suitability

- Small and medium-sized enterprises (SME)
 - Voluntary, community and social enterprises (VCSE)
-

Submission

Submission type

Requests to participate

Deadline for requests to participate

12 December 2025, 9:00am

Submission address and any special instructions

Applicants are asked to note that this procurement process will be conducted electronically with all documents and communication being managed through the Northumbrian Water e-Sourcing Spend Management portal

called 'Ariba' (<https://s1.ariba.com>). (<https://s1.ariba.com>.) Expressions of interest from this notice must be sent to the e-mail address michael.gibson@nwl.co.uk before the deadline date of the 12 December 2025 at 09:00hrs. Once expression of interest has been received that contains the details below, applicants will be given access to the Ariba portal within

48 hours from request. This portal will contain all the tender documents associated with this procurement that are available at the time. An email link will also be provided to the email address you provide to access the portal.

The deadline for return of the completed COPs is also the 12th December 2025 at 09:00. When sending expression of interest, applicants must provide the following information: 1) Full company name 2) Main contact details of the

person who will be given access to the Ariba portal - Name, job title, E mail address and telephone number.

Tenders may be submitted electronically

Yes

Languages that may be used for submission

English

Suppliers to be invited to tender

Maximum 10 suppliers

Selection criteria:

Quality - 70%

Price - 30%

A maximum of 10 vendors will be taken to RFP

6 vendors to be added to the framework contract

Award decision date (estimated)

7 March 2026

Award criteria

| Name | Type | Weighting |
|-------------|-------------|------------------|
| Quality | Quality | 70% |
| Price | Price | 30% |

Other information

Payment terms

45 days

Conflicts assessment prepared/revised

Yes

Procedure

Procedure type

Competitive flexible procedure

Special regime

Utilities

Competitive flexible procedure description

Competitive flexible procedure description

Stage 1: Invitation to participate and conditions of participation

Stage 1 commenced with the issuing of this Tender Notice and the

publication of the Conditions of Participation Document (COP) in NWL's Ariba Sourcing tool.

The document includes a COP questionnaire which all suppliers are required to complete and return in accordance with the procurement timetable and instructions within the document.

NWL will use this stage to confirm that neither the supplier, nor any related persons within its corporate group, associated persons relied on to meet the conditions of participation, or proposed sub-contractors are listed on the

Cabinet Office debarment list. To the extent that any such entities are listed on the debarment list, NWL will consider whether to exclude the supplier from participating in this procurement in accordance with its obligations

under the Act.

In addition, NWL will consider whether any supplier or related persons within its corporate group, associated persons relied on to meet the conditions of participation, or proposed sub-contractors are excluded or excludable suppliers, and before NWL determines that a supplier is an excluded or excludable supplier, it will provide the supplier reasonable opportunity to make representations and provide evidence as is proportionate in the

circumstances. If the supplier is an excluded or excludable supplier only by virtue of an associated person or proposed sub-contractor, NWL will notify the supplier of its intention to exclude the supplier and provide the supplier with reasonable opportunity to replace the associated person or subcontractor. If as a consequence of this process NWL excludes the supplier

from participating in this procurement or is aware of an associated person or sub-contract having been replaced, it will give notice of this fact within 30 days of its decision to the Procurement Review Unit (PRU).

NWL will also undertake a review of the completed COP with reference to any information held on the Central Digital Platform. Responses to any conditions of participation will be assessed in accordance with the selection process and any criteria as set out in the tender notice and described in this document. The assessment of these responses will identify the top 10

number of suppliers to be invited to participate in Stage 2.

Stage 1 will complete with suppliers being notified in writing of whether or not they have been successfully shortlisted to participate in Stage 2.

Suppliers not invited to stage 2 will be provided with a written explanation of the reasons why they have not been shortlisted to participate in Stage 2.

Suppliers should note that NWL reserves the right to re-assess any response to the conditions of participation at any stage of this procurement, including in light of any new relevant information that comes to NWL's attention.

Stage 2: Invitation to submit initial tenders

Stage 2 will commence with the notification, inviting those suppliers which have successfully been shortlisted at stage 1 of this procurement to submit initial tenders.

The notification will also provide details of any new information made available to suppliers at this stage of this procurement.

Initial tenders must be submitted in accordance with the procurement timetable and instructions set out in RFP document and any additional information provided.

Following the deadline for submission of initial tenders, NWL will assess initial tenders in accordance with the assessment process and award criteria set out in the tender notice and described in this document. The assessment process will progress to interview (Stage 3).

All suppliers part of stage 2 will be invited to stage 3 (interview) to provide additional clarity of responses.

Stage 3: Interview

We will notify vendors of how we will describe how the dialogue and/or negotiations will be conducted during interviews, including the location and dates for the relevant meetings, as

well as the attendee arrangements.

Stage 4: Invitation to submit a Best and Final Offer (BAFO)

Stage 4 will commence with the issuing of a letter inviting all suppliers remaining at stage 3 to submit their Best and Final Offer.

Best and Final offers must be submitted in accordance with the

Procurement Timetable and instructions set out in this document and any additional information provided.

After the deadline for submission of best and final offers, NWL will reconsider, in respect of each supplier that submitted, whether the supplier or any related persons within its corporate group, associated suppliers relied on to meet the conditions of participation, or proposed sub-contractors, are excluded or excludable suppliers and will consider whether to disregard the best and final offer submitted in accordance with its obligations under the Act. If the supplier is an excluded or excludable supplier only by virtue of an associated supplier or proposed sub-contractor, NWL will notify the supplier of its intention to disregard its tender and provide the supplier with a reasonable opportunity to replace the associated supplier or sub-contractor. If as a consequence of this process NWL disregards a tender from an excluded or excludable supplier or is aware of an associated supplier or subcontractor having been replaced, it will give notice of this fact within 30 days of its decision to the Procurement Review Unit (PRU)

NWL will conduct an assessment of all Best and Final offers in order to identify the supplier which has submitted the most advantageous tender in accordance with the assessment methodology and award criteria set out in the tender notice and described in this document. In carrying out this assessment, NWL will disregard any final tender from a supplier who does not satisfy the conditions of participation.

Once the assessment has concluded, NWL will provide an assessment summary to all suppliers that submitted Best and Final Offers to:

- a. inform them whether they have been successful in being awarded the contract
- b. provide an explanation of the assessment of the supplier's tender against the relevant award criteria, in accordance with the requirements of the Act
- c. where different to the supplier concerned, provide information in respect of the most

advantageous tender submitted, including details of the assessment of this tender against the relevant award criteria and the supplier's name

Once the assessment summaries have been provided to the suppliers that submitted Best and Final offers NWL will also publish a contract award notice on the Central Digital Platform to commence the mandatory standstill period.

Subject to completion of the mandatory standstill period, stage 4 will end with NWL entering into preferred supplier stage with the preferred supplier.

Stage 5: Preferred supplier stage

The highest scoring six supplier will be invited to engage in further discussions with NWL as part of a preferred supplier stage. This stage will be used to finalise the draft contract terms and conditions, in accordance with the limitations set out in the Act.

Documents

Associated tender documents

[NW3023 Customer Research and Engagement Scope \(Find a Tender copy\).docx](#)

Contracting authority

NORTHUMBRIAN WATER LIMITED

- Companies House: 02366703
- Public Procurement Organisation Number: PRLG-5541-VHHG

Northumbria House

Pity Me

DH1 5FJ

United Kingdom

Email: michael.gibson@nwl.co.uk

Region: UKC14 - Durham CC

Organisation type: Private utility