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Tender

Automated Liquid Handlers

UK Biobank Ltd

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

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Procurement identifier (OCID): ocds-h6vhtk-05e55f

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Scope

Reference

Supply, delivery, installation, and commissioning of automated liquid handlers

Description

UK Biobank requires a supplier with the necessary capacity and capability to supply, deliver, install, and commission automated liquid handlers. UK Biobank requires the Supplier to provide the System and be responsible for the design, implementation, testing, commissioning, training and service support. Detail of the requirements for the goods and services are set out within the Specification.

UK Biobank is responsible for the safe preservation and scientific exploitation of over 17 million Samples (plasma, serum, buffy coat, extracted DNA, urine and saliva) that are accessible for approved use by academic and industry researchers. About 11 million Samples are stored at -80°C across an Automated Storage System and other manual Freezers at UK Biobank's headquarters in Stockport, Greater Manchester. The remaining

6 million Samples are stored in vapour phase Liquid Nitrogen Tanks at a Backup Site in the South of England.

UK Biobank undertakes the supply of Samples for different sizes of research projects:

- from handfuls to ~5,000 Cherry Picked Samples for piloting or case-control studies (where Samples are likely picked from across the whole collection);
- projects involving ~50,000 Samples (with some degree of Cherry Picking);
- longitudinal sets of Samples for the same Participants over several time-points; and/or
- retrieval of whole cohort sets (~500,000 Samples, with a higher density of Samples clustered together).

UK Biobank's next phase of strategic development will be characterised by increasing demand for access to Samples and several new

large-scale Sample collections. UK Biobank, therefore, requires new Systems with sufficient capacity, flexibility, and resilience to support the next 10 years of work as set out in this Specification. The System should deliver capacity to Reformat Samples to send to researchers to conduct assays and provide capability to process Vacutainers.

Consequently, UK Biobank has prepared a Specification for a Solution to meet the increased throughput demands that the new site must support foreseeable operational requirements and potential future developments, including but not limited to;

- Increase in Sample supply to external laboratories at least four-fold (1 million Samples per year); Reformatting.
- Extensive new Sample collections from UK Biobank Participants (and potentially their relatives) at multiple future time-points; Vacutainer Processing.
- Prospective creation of whole cohort Destination Samples (for projects) whilst a Stock Sample is thawed for processing, split the remaining Sample across multiple storage Tubes; Reformatting.
- Likely change to alternative Labware for new Sample collections and selective reformatting of existing Samples coincident with their next freeze-thaw cycle or en-masse; Reformatting.

The System will be required to support UK Biobank laboratory operations when they move to a New Site at the Manchester Science Park in the City of Manchester in the North West of England, UK. Practical completion of the New Site is planned for July 2026 (with early

access to the laboratory area from May 2026 for installation of the Solution).

The move to Manchester Science Park will be accompanied by new Automated Storage Systems and new LIMS. The following work will be ongoing throughout 2026, in anticipation of an early 2027 opening to the New Site;

- Transfer 11 million Samples from the existing facility
- Install and commission new equipment and move and validate existing equipment
- Implement a new LIMS

The laboratory has been designed to accommodate Liquid Handling Systems in the Reformatting Lab (to support equipment to meet the mandatory throughput described in Sections 2.2.2 and 2.2.3). There is expansion space in the North of the ground floor that could be used for the optional expansion throughput described in Section 2.2.4.

As part of this procurement, some award questions are mandatory and will be scored on pass/fail basis, and others have with weighted scoring, as detailed in Volume 1 of the tender documents.

The estimated contract value for the purchase of the Liquid Handlers and the provision of services as set out in this Contract Notice and for the duration described may be in the range of £1.2m - £3.2m GBP. We do not anticipate the cost to deliver the Solution without expansion to exceed £1.8m.

UK Biobank reserves the right to discontinue or delay the procurement process and may decide not to award a contract as a result of this call for competition. UK Biobank shall not be liable for any costs or expenses incurred by any organisation in considering and/or responding to the procurement process. Tenders and supporting documents must be priced in pounds sterling and all payments made under the contract will be in pounds sterling, unless otherwise advised.

UK Biobank will incorporate a standstill period at the point the decision in relation to the award of the contracts is notified to bidders. The standstill period, which will be a minimum of ten (10) calendar days, provides time for unsuccessful bidders to lodge an appeal in regards to the award decisions, before the contracts are entered into.

Tenderers are advised to allow adequate time for uploading documents and to dispatch the electronic response well in advance of the closing time to avoid any last minute problems

NOTE: To register your interest in this notice and obtain any additional information please visit the myTenders Web Site at

https://www.mytenders.co.uk/Search/Search_Switch.aspx?ID=233323.

A user guide is available at https://www.mytenders.co.uk/sitehelp/help_guides.aspx.

Total value (estimated)

- £3,200,000 excluding VAT
- £3,840,000 including VAT

Above the relevant threshold

Contract dates (estimated)

- 27 March 2026 to 26 March 2029
- Possible extension to 26 March 2032
- 6 years

Description of possible extension:

The initial term for the contract will be three years, with the option for UKB to extend the contract by further year-long periods, up to a maximum total term of 6 years (i.e. inclusive of the initial term), with the contract to commence in March 2026.

Main procurement category

Goods

CPV classifications

- 38000000 - Laboratory, optical and precision equipments (excl. glasses)

Contract locations

- UK - United Kingdom

Participation

Particular suitability

Small and medium-sized enterprises (SME)

Submission

Enquiry deadline

12 December 2025, 5:00pm

Tender submission deadline

5 January 2026, 12:00pm

Submission address and any special instructions

<https://www.mytenders.co.uk>

Tenders may be submitted electronically

Yes

Languages that may be used for submission

English

Award decision date (estimated)

9 March 2026

Award criteria

Name	Description	Type	Weighting
Price	Price	Price	30.00%
Sample processing	Sample processing	Quality	10.00%
Throughput and Timings	Throughput and Timings	Quality	10.00%
Configuration	Configuration	Quality	7.00%
Traceability	Traceability	Quality	7.00%
LIMS integration	LIMS integration	Quality	7.00%
Error handling	Error handling	Quality	7.00%
Quality, Safety and Environment	Quality, Safety and Environment	Quality	7.00%
Overall solution	Overall solution	Quality	5.00%
Installation and Implementation	Installation and Implementation	Quality	5.00%
Maintenance, Servicing and Support	Maintenance, Servicing and Support	Quality	5.00%

Other information

Applicable trade agreements

- Government Procurement Agreement (GPA)

Conflicts assessment prepared/revised

Yes

Procedure

Procedure type

Open procedure

Justification for not publishing a preliminary market engagement notice

A preliminary market engagement notice was not published as the requirements are not specialist, complex or niche, and the market is known , and UK Biobank understands our requirements.

Documents

Associated tender documents

https://www.mytenders.co.uk/Authority/NoticeBuilder/NoticeBuilder_FileDownload.aspx?id=621498

UK Biobank Liquid Handlers ITT Volume 1 201125

https://www.mytenders.co.uk/Authority/NoticeBuilder/NoticeBuilder_FileDownload.aspx?id=621499

UK Biobank Liquid Handlers ITT Volume 2 201125

https://www.mytenders.co.uk/Authority/NoticeBuilder/NoticeBuilder_FileDownload.aspx?id=621500

UK Biobank Liquid Handlers Specification 201125

https://www.mytenders.co.uk/Authority/NoticeBuilder/NoticeBuilder_FileDownload.aspx?id=621501

UK Biobank Liquid Handlers Key Contractual Principles 201125

Contracting authority

UK Biobank Ltd

- Public Procurement Organisation Number: PXGY-4832-TWCN

1-2 Spectrum Way

Stockport

SK3 0SA

United Kingdom

Contact name: Andrea Howard

Telephone: +44 7824 509469

Email: tenders@ukbiobank.ac.uk

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

Region: UKD35 - Greater Manchester South East

Organisation type: Public undertaking (commercial organisation subject to public authority oversight)