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Tender

Scientific Consultant for Medicines Discovery Catapult

MEDICINES DISCOVERY CATAPULT LIMITED

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

Notice identifier: 2025/S 000-078062

Procurement identifier (OCID): ocds-h6vhtk-05eb03

Published 28 November 2025, 12:36pm

Scope

Description

Medicines Discovery Catapult (MDC) is an independent, not-for-profit innovation centre for drug discovery and part of the Catapult Network established by Innovate UK.

MDC's vision is to reshape drug discovery for patient benefit by transforming great UK science into better treatments through partnership. It supports drug discovery innovators by making world-class expertise, facilities, complex technologies, and advanced analytics accessible to enable successful medicines discovery.

MDC develops pioneering, impactful R&D collaborations across biotech, academia, technology companies, charities, and global pharma. It brings these communities together in active, focused national programmes that target high-risk areas of patient need.

This requirement originates from the Partnership Team at Medicines Discovery Catapult (MDC), which includes national programmes across neuroscience and infection, virtual R&D, and complex medicine. The team plays a central role in enabling and accelerating UK drug discovery by identifying unmet needs, supporting ecosystem coordination, and helping to navigate the scientific and translational complexities of areas such as diseases of the brain.

To fulfil its role effectively, the team must remain consistently informed about recent

scientific developments, innovation opportunities, and areas of commercial promise. This enables MDC to identify and shape collaborative initiatives, support investment cases, and build strategies aligned to evolving national and global health priorities.

The current emphasis has been on neuroscience, particularly neurodegenerative diseases, mental health, and drug discovery and delivery. Previous work has included:

- A landscape mapping exercise to inform the strategy for the Dementia Goals Programme, providing a foundational view of the UK's capabilities, gaps, and opportunities;
- Exploration of emerging scientific trends and innovation gaps within mental health, supporting the work of the Psychiatry Consortium;
- Early-stage analysis on cross-cutting opportunities within complex medicine.

Building on this initial work, MDC now seeks to expand the scope and focus of the landscape activity to include:

- Deeper insights into priority areas aligned to the Partnership Team's strategic objectives;
- A clearer understanding of challenges such as blood-brain barrier (BBB) penetration and the development of novel Central Nervous System drug modalities;
- Identification of translational and commercial opportunities across neuroscience and beyond (e.g., infectious diseases).

MDC requires a consultant to:

- Provide ongoing scientific and strategic intelligence relevant to current and future areas of focus and interest such as neuroscience, infection, CNS drug delivery, etc.
- Identify translational and commercial opportunities through horizon scanning and landscape analysis in defined scientific areas.
- Support development of investment cases and programme design by synthesising internal and external data sources.
- Produce materials including presentations, written briefs, dashboards, and updates for internal and external stakeholders.

Deliverables would be specific for each project, but it is expected that they could include:

- Monthly briefings summarising relevant scientific, policy, and/or commercial developments (oral or written).
- At least one deep-dive landscape output (e.g., dashboard, short report or slide deck) per quarter, focused on agreed priority themes (e.g., BBB, emerging modalities, patient stratification).
- Ad hoc input to internal programme development and stakeholder materials (e.g., funder presentations, project design).

The supplier must have a proven track record of delivering high quality technical writing, with strong communication skills. A minimum of 5 years' experience in technical or scientific writing, with demonstrable experience in life sciences.

Access to proprietary databases to access the relevant datasets useful for the specific projects (including OpenAlex, Europe PMC, PubMed, CrossRef, Dimensions, [Lens.org](https://www.lenso.org/) (patents), [ClinicalTrials.gov](https://www.clinicaltrials.gov/), WHO ICTRP, NICE Evidence). Expertise in the use of AI and language models to automate and classify data retrieval and apply thematic analyses
Proven ability to synthesise scientific and commercial insights for strategic use. Previously work in areas relevant to MDC strategic mission.

Total value (estimated)

- £75,000 excluding VAT
- £90,000 including VAT

Below the relevant threshold

Contract dates (estimated)

- 1 February 2026 to 31 August 2026
- Possible extension to 31 August 2028
- 2 years, 7 months

Description of possible extension:

Medicines Discovery Catapult will have the option to extend the contract for a further two 12 month periods, dependent on satisfactory performance and work required.

Main procurement category

Services

CPV classifications

- 73000000 - Research and development services and related consultancy services

Participation

Particular suitability

Small and medium-sized enterprises (SME)

Submission

Enquiry deadline

12 December 2025, 3:00pm

Tender submission deadline

19 December 2025, 3:00pm

Submission address and any special instructions

<https://procontract.due-north.com/Advert?advertId=a2f7173e-54cc-f011-813a-005056b64545>

Tenders may be submitted electronically

Yes

Award criteria

Name	Type	Weighting
Quality	Quality	80%
Price	Price	20%

Procedure

Procedure type

Below threshold - open competition

Contracting authority

MEDICINES DISCOVERY CATAPULT LIMITED

- Companies House: 09928547

- Public Procurement Organisation Number: PJPQ-6911-DQYY

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Macclesfield

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Region: UKD62 - Cheshire East

Organisation type: Public authority - sub-central government