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**Request for Quotation**

Riparian Buffer Strip Tool and Methodology: project scale assessments

# May 2025

**Request for Quotation**

**Riparian Buffer Strip (RBS) Tool and Methodology for project scale assessments**

You are invited to submit a quotation for the requirement described in the specification, Section 2.

Please confirm by email, receipt of these documents and whether you intend to submit a quote or not.

Your response should be returned to the following email address by:

Email:**Georgia.findlay@naturalengland.org.uk**

Date: **21/06/2025**

Time: **17:00**

Ensure you include the name of the quotation and **‘Final Submission’** in the subject field to make it clear that it is your response.

**Contact Details and Timetable**

**Georgie Findlay** will be your contact for any questions linked to the content of the quote or the process. Please submit any clarification questions via email and note that, unless commercially sensitive, both the question and the response will be circulated to all tenderers.

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| Action | Date |
| Date of issue of RFQ | **28-May-2025** at 17:00 **BST / GMT** |
| Deadline for clarifications questions | **18-June-2025** at 17:00 **BST / GMT** |
| Deadline for receipt of Quotation | **21-June-2025** at **17:00 BST / GMT** |
| Intended date of Contract Award | **28-June-2025** |
| Intended Contract Start Date | **30-June-2025** |
| Intended Delivery Date / Contract Duration  | **11-August-2025** |

**Contractors should be mindful that timelines for the contract award and intended start date may be subject to delays, and there remains a possibility that the contract may not be awarded at all.**

**Section 1: General Information**

**Glossary**

Unless the context otherwise requires, the following words and expressions used within this Request for Quotation shall have the following meanings (to be interpreted in the singular or plural as the context requires):

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| “Authority” | means Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs acting as part of Natural England. who is the Contracting Authority.  |
| “Contract” | means the contract to be entered into by the Authority and the successful supplier. |
| “Response” | means the information submitted by a supplier in response to the RFQ. |
| “RFQ” | means this Request for Quotation and all related documents published by the Authority and made available to suppliers. |

**Conditions applying to the RFQ**

You should examine your Response and related documents ensuring it is complete and in accordance with the stated instructions prior to submission.

Your Response must contain sufficient information to enable the Authority to evaluate it fairly and effectively. You should ensure that you have prepared your Response fully and accurately and that prices quoted are arithmetically correct for the units stated.

By submitting a Response, you, the supplier, are deemed to accept the terms and conditions provided in the RFQ. Confirmation of this is required in Annex 2.

Failure to comply with the instructions set out in the RFQ may result in the supplier’s exclusion from this quotation process.

**Acceptance of Quotations**

By issuing this RFQ the Authority does not bind itself to accept any quotation and reserves the right not to award a contract to any supplier who submits a quotation.

**Costs**

The Authority will not reimburse you for any costs and expenses which you incur preparing and submitting your quotation, even if the Authority amends or terminates the procurement process.

**Self-Declaration and Mandatory Requirements**

The RFQ includes a self-declaration response (Annex 1) which covers basic information about the supplier, as well as any grounds for exclusion. If you do not comply with them, your quotation will not be evaluated.

Any mandatory requirements will be set out in Section 2, Specification of Requirements and, if you do not comply with them, your quotation will not be evaluated.

**Clarifications**

Any request for clarification regarding the RFQ and supporting documentation must be submitted via email no later than the deadline for clarifications set out in the Timetable. The Authority shall be under no obligation to respond to queries raised after the clarification deadline.

The Authority will respond to all reasonable clarifications as soon as possible but cannot guarantee a minimum response time. The Authority will publish all clarifications and its responses to all suppliers via email unless deemed commercially sensitive.

If a supplier believes that a request for clarification is commercially sensitive, it should clearly state this when submitting the clarification request. However, if the Authority considers either that:

the clarification and response are not commercially sensitive; and

all suppliers may benefit from its disclosure,

then the Authority will notify the supplier (via email), and the supplier will have an opportunity to withdraw the request for clarification by sending a further message requesting the withdrawal of the clarification request. If not withdrawn by the supplier within 2 working days of the Authority’s notification, the Authority may publish the clarification request and its response to all suppliers and the Authority shall not be liable to the supplier for any consequences of such publication.

The Authority reserves the right to seek clarification of any aspect of a quotation and/or provide additional information during the evaluation phase to carry out a fair evaluation. Where the Authority seeks clarification on any aspect of the quotation, the supplier must respond within the timeframe requested by the Authority.

**Amendments**

The Authority may amend the RFQ at any time prior to the deadline for receipt. If it amends the RFQ the Authority will notify you via email.

Suppliers may modify their quotation prior to the deadline for Responses. No Responses may be modified after the deadline for Responses.

 Suppliers may withdraw their quotations at any time by submitting a notice via the email to the named contact.

**Conditions of Contract**

The Authority’s [Standard goods and services terms and conditions (£10,000 to £50,000) - GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/natural-england-terms-and-conditions-for-goods-and-services/standard-goods-and-services-terms-and-conditions-10000-to-50000) terms provided as part of the RFQ will be included in any contract awarded as a result of this quotation process. The Authority will not accept any changes to these terms and conditions proposed by a supplier.

Suppliers should note that the quotation provided by the successful bidder will form part of the Contract.

**Prices**

Prices must be submitted in £ sterling, **exclusive** of VAT.

**Disclosure**

All Central Government Departments, their Executive Agencies and Non Departmental Public Bodies are subject to control and reporting within Government. In particular, they report to the Cabinet Office and HM Treasury for all expenditure. Further the Cabinet Office has a cross-Government role delivering overall Government policy on public procurement, including ensuring value for money and related aspects of good procurement practice. For these purposes, the Authority may disclose within Government any details contained in your quotation. The information will not be disclosed outside Government during the procurement.

In addition, the Authority is subject to the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and the Environmental Information Regulations 2004, which provide a public right of access to information held by public bodies. In accordance with these two statutes, the Authority may be required to disclose information contained in your quotation to any person who submits a request for information pursuant to those statutes.

Further to the Government’s transparency agenda, all UK Government organisations must advertise on Contract Finder in accordance with the following publication thresholds:

Central Contracting Authority’s: £12,000

Sub Central Contracting Authority’s and NHS Trusts: £30,000

For the purpose of this RFQ the Authority is classified as a **Central Contracting Authority** with a publication threshold of **£12,000** inclusive of VAT.

If this opportunity is advertised via Contracts Finder, we are obliged to publish details of the awarded contract including who has won the contract, the contract value, and indicate whether the winning supplier is a small and medium-sized enterprise (“SMEs”) or voluntary organisation or charity. A copy of the contract must also be published with confidential information redacted.

By submitting a Response, you consent to these terms as part of the procurement.

**Disclaimers**

Whilst the information in this RFQ and any supporting information referred to herein or provided to you by the Authority have been prepared in good faith the Authority does not warrant that this information is comprehensive or that it has been independently verified.

The Authority does not:

make any representation or warranty (express or implied) as to the accuracy, reasonableness or completeness of the RFQ;

accept any liability for the information contained in the RFQ or for the fairness, accuracy or completeness of that information; or

accept any liability for any loss or damage (other than in respect of fraudulent misrepresentation or any other liability which cannot lawfully be excluded) arising as a result of reliance on such information or any subsequent communication.

Any supplier considering entering into contractual relationships with the Authority following receipt of the RFQ should make its own investigations and independent assessment of the Authority and its requirements for the goods and/or services and should seek its own professional financial and legal advice.

**Protection of Personal Data**

In order to comply with the General Data Protection Regulations 2018 the supplier must agree to the following:

 You must only process any personal data in strict accordance with instructions from the Authority.

You must ensure that all the personal data that we disclose to you or you collect on our behalf under this agreement are kept confidential.

You must take reasonable steps to ensure the reliability of employees who have access to personal data.

Only employees who may be required to assist in meeting the obligations under this agreement may have access to the personal data.

Any disclosure of personal data must be made in confidence and extend only so far as that which is specifically necessary for the purposes of this agreement.

You must ensure that there are appropriate security measures in place to safeguard against any unauthorised access or unlawful processing or accidental loss, destruction or damage or disclosure of the personal data.

On termination of this agreement, for whatever reason, the personal data must be returned to us promptly and safely, together with all copies in your possession or control.

**General Data Protection Regulations 2018**

For the purposes of the Regulations the Authority is the data processor.

The personal information that we have asked you provide on individuals (data subjects) that will be working for you on this contract will be used in compiling the tender list and in assessing your offer. If you are unsuccessful the information will be held and destroyed within two years of the award of contracts. If you are awarded a contract it will be retained for the duration of the contract and destroyed within seven years of the contract’s expiry.

We may monitor the performance of the individuals during the execution of the contract, and the results of our monitoring, together with the information that you have provided, will be used in determining what work is allocated under the contract, and in any renewal of the contract or in the award of future contracts of a similar nature. The information will not be disclosed to anyone outside the Authority without the consent of the data subject, unless the Authority is required by law to make such disclosures.

**Equality, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI)**

The Client is striving to create a diverse and inclusive working environment where every individual has equality of opportunity to progress and to apply their unique insights to making the UK a great place for living. The Service Provider is expected to respect this commitment in all dealings with **Natural England** staff and service users.

Suppliers are expected to;

support Defra group to achieve its Public Sector Equality Duty as defined by the Equality Act 2010, and to support delivery of [Defra group’s Equality & Diversity Strategy](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/defra-group-equality-diversity-and-inclusion-strategy-2020-to-2024/defra-group-equality-diversity-and-inclusion-strategy-2020-to-2024).

meet the standards set out in the [Government’s Supplier Code of Conduct](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/supplier-code-of-conduct)

work with Defra group to ensure equality, diversity and inclusion impacts are addressed (positive and negative) in the goods, services and works we procure, barriers are removed and opportunities realised.

**Sustainable Procurement**

Addressing global sustainability impacts and realising additional community benefits within commercial activity is core to Defra group’s approach, working with its supply chain is key to achieving sustainable outcomes. In addition to supporting Defra group to meet its outcomes we look to understand and reduce negative sustainability impacts associated with our commercial activity and realise benefits.

The Client encourages its suppliers to share these values, work to address negative impacts and realise opportunities, measure performance and success.

Suppliers are expected to have an understanding of the Sustainable Development Goals, the interconnections between them and the relevance to the Goods, Services and works procured on the Client’s behalf

**Conflicts of Interest**

The concept of a conflict of interest includes but is not limited to any situation where an Involved Person or Relevant Body has directly or indirectly, a financial, economic or other personal interest which might be perceived to compromise their impartiality and independence in the context of the procurement procedure and/or affect the integrity of the contract award.

We expect suppliers to mitigate appropriately against any real or perceived conflict of interest through their work with government. A supplier with a position of influence gained through a contract should not use that position to unfairly disadvantage any other supplier or reduce the potential for future competition

Where the supplier is aware of any circumstances giving rise to a conflict of interest or has any indication that a conflict of interest exists or may arise you should inform the Authority of this as soon as possible (whether before or after they have submitted a quotation). Tenderers should remain alert to the possibility of conflicts of interest arising at all stages of the procurement and should update the Authority if any new circumstances or information arises, or there are any changes to information already provided to the Authority. Failure to do so, and/or to properly manage any conflicts of interest may result in a quotation being rejected.

Provided that it has been carried out in an open, fair and transparent manner, routine pre-market engagement carried out by the Authority should not represent a conflict of interest for the supplier.

**Section 2: The Invitation**

**Specification of Requirements**

## Background to Natural England

Natural England (NE) is the Government’s advisor on the natural environment. It provides practical advice, grounded in science, on how best to safeguard England’s natural wealth for the benefit of everyone. Natural England’s remit is to ensure sustainable stewardship of the land and sea so that people and nature can thrive. It is our responsibility to see that England’s rich natural environment can adapt and survive intact for future generations to enjoy.

Further information about the Authority can be found at: [Natural England](https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/natural-england).

## Background to Nutrient Neutrality

Investing in nature generates prosperity. A healthy environment and a vibrant economy must go hand in hand - our economic prosperity and well-being depends upon doing so. Through Nutrient Neutrality Natural England and the Government are working with Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) to enable the homes the country needs to be built while cleaning up our waterways.

Nutrient pollution is an urgent problem for freshwater habitats and estuaries which provide a home to wetland birds, fish, and insects. Increased levels of nutrients like nitrogen and phosphorus can speed up the growth of certain plants, disrupting natural processes and devastating wildlife. The impacts for people are also significant, with dirty waterways spoiling enjoyment of the outdoors.

While the government has taken substantial steps to tackle the issue, there is a need to fast track progress in hotspot areas alongside existing approaches including nutrient credit trading schemes, Local Planning Authority (LPA)-led mitigation schemes and onsite mitigation solutions integrated into the design of housing developments to unlock homebuilding across the country.

To this end Natural England is looking to develop a bespoke tool or calculator to quantify the nutrient reductions generated by implementing riparian buffer strips (RBS) in Nutrient Neutrality (NN) catchments. This tool will facilitate mitigation scheme suppliers to design and deliver robust RBS to generate nutrient reductions capable of offsetting nutrient inputs from development in NN catchments.

This tool and its associated guidance will be part of a wider project Natural England has begun to produce standardised tools, guidance and assessment criteria to ensure conservation measure projects (mitigation schemes) are effective at achieving the intended environmental outcome. This project, the Conservation Measures Standard (CMS) will develop Solution Toolkits for each of the measure relied upon to deliver nutrient mitigation, prioritising the most effective and commonly used measures to allow scheme suppliers to design and implement high-quality schemes in accordance with the set standard.

**The key deliverables for this contract will be:**

**Scope of Works:**

Natural England are building on existing work on RBS to generate nutrient mitigation by commissioning a comprehensive methodology and tool to accurately quantify the nutrient reduction achieved at a project scale through the implementation of RBS. To do this we require:

1. **Methodology:** to design a robust methodology to calculate the N and P reduction achieved in kg/year by implementing a RBS project in a NN catchment. This will need to be developed in collaboration with NE and should incorporate the existing evidence base commissioned by NE.
2. **Tool:** to develop a tool to enable site specific calculations for N and P reductions achieved by a RBS project. This must be based on the above methodology and should incorporate a level of precaution to account for any uncertainty.

These deliverables will need to be managed and administered by Natural England once the project is complete and are likely to be amended and updated over time.

**Requirements:**

The commission is expected to follow the two steps below.

* 1. **Develop the modelling methodology**

The contractor is to create a robust modelling methodology for calculating nutrient reductions generated by a project, site specific scale through delivering a RBS. Where possible, information required in the methodology should be nationally accessible for project designers and key site-specific information should be attainable at relatively low cost to project designers, to facilitate the delivery of RPS projects.

The methodology should be informed by NE’s [published reports](https://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/6621036603506688?category=4973791923666944) and use the percentage nutrient removal percentage outlined in the commissioned [report](https://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/4612285902094336). The methodology should consider modelling approaches developed for nature-based solutions using similar nutrient removal processes to deliver mitigation, for example, alignment with the modelling [method](https://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/5530993254203392) for baseline nutrient inputs from diffuse pollution in the watershed of enhanced drainage ditches. It is not expected that the contractor will need to undertake any additional evidence reviews. The methodology should adopt the precautionary approach where there is any scientific uncertainty. The methodology should be submitted in word document to NE’s project manager.

A key consideration for the contractor when designing the methodology (and tool) for RBS is balancing the need for scientific robustness with the feasibility of delivering RBS projects. This will be discussed in collaboration with NE’s nutrients team through routine meetings.

The methodology should account for the following factors:

* Nutrient losses from the watershed (including diffuse and point source nutrient inputs) and deducting the proportion of nutrient losses from the watershed that would bypass or not reach or be intercepted by the RBS to receive the treatment. These may include sedimentation, P precipitation or losses to groundwater.
* Nutrient reductions achieved through cessation of agriculture within the RBS, ideally this element of the methodology would be a separate output within the tool (see below)
* Baseline nutrient inputs accounting for losses to groundwater and compliance with agricultural regulations will be provided to contractor, including the methodology and export coefficients.
* Consider factors impacting project deliverability, for example, restrict the watershed area delineated by the RBS to the smaller of the two:
	+ An area of 4 fields or less above the RBS
	+ An area of less than 50 times the area of the RBS
* Consider the key design criteria needed to optimise different processes for treating N and P in the RBS, to ensure nutrient reduction values from RBS are achieved by incorporating the impact of this criteria in the methodology. E.g., tree planting density/areas of concentrated runoff. Assumptions used in methodology will inform RBS targeting strategy for schemes.
* Consider factors likely to contribute to RBS failure to deliver nutrient reductions and assess option to apply a risk multiplier for these factors within the calculator, to ensure the tool calculates reasonable N and P reduction outputs that are reflective of the project

The final methodology will be agreed with NE technical specialists before the tool is built. See timetable for further info. NE will also compare methodology proposal to other NbS calculators and other NE commissioned work to ensure alignment and manage risks.

1. **Developing the tool**

The contractor is to develop a user-friendly tool for RBS projects to calculate the reduction of Total Nitrogen and Total Phosphorus achieved by implanting a RBS (in kg/year). The calculator will be based on the above methodology agreed with NE and should enable others to reproduce nutrient reduction calculations for RBS. The tool must incorporate a function to alter the nutrient reductions generated depending on the design specification of the RBS, e.g., a RBS’s design will either be optimised for N or P removal processes so the N or P reductions will need to reflect the design.

The tool may use a GIS data processing tools and/or look-up tools to inform accurate quantification of nutrient reductions generated by RBS in set locations in NN catchments. Any datasets or code incorporated in the tool needs to be shared with NE on completion to enable NE to make amendments and have control of the tool following contract completion.  The tool should aim to use freely available datasets, unless inputs require more site specific or local information.

The tool will also need to be built in accordance with NE’s checklist for analytical pipelines of minimisation of manual steps.

* being built using open-source software
* being easily shareable and compatible with a wide range of systems
* maintaining an audit trail using version control software
* following good practice for quality assurance
* containing well-commented code and have documentation embedded and version controlled within the product

It is expected that the contractor will aim to utilise existing publications such as:

* [NECR538 Evidence Base Development for Nature-Based Nutrient Mitigation Solutions – Literature Review](https://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/6680815300509696)
* [NECR541 Information on How to Deliver and Assess Riparian Buffer Strips for Nutrient Mitigation - NECR541](https://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/4612285902094336)
* Nutrient Reduction Standard for Interceptor Wetland and Interceptor Woodland Projects (Arup and Entrade, July 2022) - (available once contract has been awarded)
* NE methodology for accounting for compliance when modelling export coefficients from agricultural land use (available once contract has been awarded)
* NE’s methodology for defining Nutrient Neutrality catchments boundaries (available once contract has been awarded)

It is expected that the contractor will aim to utilise existing datasets and tools such as

* Export coefficients for each crop type and livestock type/density which represent the total losses of Total Nitrogen and Total Phosphorus from agricultural land (kg/year/ha) and the losses of from agricultural land accounting for losses to groundwater (available once contract has been awarded)
* Land cover datasets including [UKCEH Land Cover data](https://www.ceh.ac.uk/data/ukceh-land-cover-maps?gad_source=1&gclid=EAIaIQobChMI5e2Jn5HIjAMV9ZpQBh0SkizNEAAYASAAEgKnCfD_BwE) or [Crop Map of England (CROME) 2020](https://environment.data.gov.uk/dataset/7fdb6312-801c-41f6-996d-4585d2bb4684)
* Soilscapes 2024 Cranfield University Data
* HadUK Rainfall Data from the Met Office
* [Access ALERT | PublicALERT Environment AgencyLargeScreen20240813.](https://experience.arcgis.com/experience/fd8e7ede2548409f965275da8e8d35f7/page/Access-ALERT) (EA, 2025) Agricultural Land Environmental Risk and Opportunity Tool
* Nutrient Neutrality Calculators [Using the nutrient neutrality calculators - GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/using-the-nutrient-neutrality-calculators)

The above list is not exhaustive, and the contractor may use additional datasets to inform analysis.

It is important that the link between the nutrient reduction quantification for RBS projects align to other opportunity mapping work produced by NE. The tool will need to be completed in line with NE’s checklist for analytical pipelines and all datasets & code will be shared with NE upon completion.

**Payment**

The Authority will raise purchase orders to cover the cost of the services and will issue to the awarded supplier following contract award.

The Authority’s preference is for all invoices to be sent electronically, quoting a valid Purchase Order number. Payment can be made in two instalments, with 25% to be invoiced upon receipt of the inception note, and the remaining 75% to be invoiced upon agreement of the final deliverables. This can be negotiated with the Authority.

It is anticipated that this contract will be awarded for a length of time based on communication between the chosen supplier and NE during the inception meeting. Prices will remain fixed for the duration of the contract award period; we anticipate this price to be £24,999 excluding VAT. We may at our sole discretion extend this contract to include related or further work. Any extension shall be agreed in writing in advance of any work commencing and may be subject to further competition.

**Evaluation Methodology**

This section sets out the contract requirements. Suppliers must explain how they will deliver the required outputs within the specified timeframe and to budget. They must further demonstrate that they have the required skills and experience. Information on how this will be evaluated can be found below under Quotation Submission.

**Outputs and Contract Management**

The main outputs for this project will be:

* A project inception meeting by video call (e.g. MS Teams/Zoom) within the first week of the project start. All costs associated with attending the inception meeting must be incorporated into the fixed price. The successful Tenderer must identify an individual who will manage the project and nominate a representative for day-to-day contact with the Authority’s project officer.
* Fortnightly calls with the project steering group to provide updates on progress in line with agreed deliverables and milestones, emerging findings, get knowledge input and feedback on deliverables if necessary.
* Quality-assured methodology and tool or code developed to be submitted to project manager in Word, Excel, GIS or Python format. If any other format is to be used, this has to be agreed with the project manager at the start of the project and would need to be something which is accessible to all NE staff.

**Timetable**

All deliverables will be required by 11th August 2025. This work will inform a government priority and there will be limited ability to negotiate or extend timescales. Fortnightly meetings for the length of the project are likely to be required.

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| **Deliverable** | **Date of completion** |
| Contract Set up meeting  | w/c 30th June  |
| Meeting with NE to confirm the tool layout  | w/c 21st July  |
| Submit RBS tool/calculator to NE | w/c 4th August  |
| Meeting with NE to agree project completion  | w/c 11th August |

**Supporting Documentation**

The following supporting documentation should be provided:

* Research methodologies
* Health & safety policies/certificates
* Environment policies
* VAT registration number
* Public liability insurance
* Professional indemnity insurance
* CV’s
* Past work

## Quotation Submission

Completed submissions should include the following items:

* evidence that you meet the quality criteria set out in the specification;
* your proposed pricing structure (to include name of staff, grade, day rate and total number of days allocated to each task and deliverable) ;
* your proposed workplan for the project
* your key personnel who will be directly involved with this contract, their role and time allocation for the elements of the project and their wetland expertise and experience. We will be looking for a high level of expertise and experience.
* proposed methodology
* quality assurance (QA), project management and risk management measures
* management of sustainable impacts
* Health and Safety

The outputs of the contract are included in the specification above. Fortnightly check-ins with the Project Officer via a Teams call or email, to discuss progress and/or any issues, will be required from October 2023 onwards, for the duration of the contract.

The project outputs are to be produced in a written final report in Word and pdf formats, as well as any accompanying visuals/graphics, spreadsheets and models. All reports will be clearly presented, concise, written in plain English with a target audience of an educated lay person. Reports will be supplied by email in Microsoft Word 97-2003 and pdf formats.

It is NE’s expectation that all final project reports are published, NE however reserves the right to determine if and how results should be published.

We will award this contract in line with the most economically advantageous tender (MEAT) as set out in the following award criteria:

Technical – **60**%

Commercial – **40**%

Evaluation criteria

Evaluation weightings are **60**% technical and **40**% commercial, the winning tenderer will be the highest scoring combined score.

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| Award Criteria | Weighting (%) | Evaluation Topic & Weighting | Sub-Criteria | Weighted Question |
| **Technical** | **60%** | **Service / Product Proposal** | **Understanding of NE Requirements** | **1 Questions****Q1.1 (10% of technical score available)** |
| **Methodology** | **1 Question****Q2 (50% of technical score available)** |
| **Key Personnel** | **1 Questions****Q3.1 (40% of technical score available)** |
| **Commercial** | **40%** | **Whole life cost of the proposed Contract** | **Commercial Model** | **1 Question** **Q4 (100% of commercial score available)** |

**Technical (**60**%)**

Technical evaluations will be based on responses to specific questions covering key criteria which are outlined below. Scores for questions will be based on the following:

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| Description | Score  | Definition |
| Very good  | 100 | Addresses all the Authority’s requirements with all the relevant supporting information set out in the RFQ. There are no weaknesses and therefore the tender response gives the Authority complete confidence that all the requirements will be met to a high standard.  |
| Good | 70 | Addresses all the Authority’s requirements with all the relevant supporting information set out in the RFQ. The response contains minor weaknesses and therefore the tender response gives the Authority confidence that all the requirements will be met to a good standard.  |
| Moderate | 50 | Addresses most of the requirements with most of the relevant supporting information set out in the RFQ. The response contains moderate weaknesses and therefore the tender response gives the Authority confidence that most of the requirements will be met to a suitable standard.  |
| Weak  | 20 | Substantially addresses the requirements but not all and provides supporting information that is of limited or no relevance or a methodology containing significant weaknesses and therefore raises concerns for the Authority that the requirements may not all be met. |
| Unacceptable | 0 | No response or provides a response that gives the Authority no confidence that the requirement will be met.  |

**Contractors: Failure to meet any minimum score threshold stated will result in the bid being removed from the process with no further evaluation regardless of other quality or price scores.**

Technical evaluation is assessed using the evaluation topics and sub-criteria stated in the Evaluation Criteria section above.

Separate submissions for each technical question should be provided and will be evaluated in isolation. Tenderers should provide answers that meet the criteria of each technical question.

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| **Understanding of NE Requirements** | Detailed Evaluation Criteria |
| **Q1.** Outline your understanding of Natural England requirements in this specification.***Minimum score threshold below 50 will apply.*** | Demonstrate and evidence a clear understanding of the nature of the requirements.Explain how you interpret the requirements and their significance to successful delivery of the contract. Highlight any challenges related to the specification and outline steps to address them.  |

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| **Methodology** | Detailed Evaluation Criteria |
| **Q2.** Outline the proposed **approaches** you will use to deliver this contract, giving justification for the methods proposed.***Minimum score threshold below 50 will apply.*** | Detail the specific approach you will use to fulfil this contract. This should be a clear, practical, achievable, and cost-effective methodology to deliver requirements.Please include a provisional project plan, including details of how the project will meet the key deliverables. Explain how personnel and resources will be allocated to the contract, including the number of days to the delivery of each task and deliverable.Include a short assessment of risks and dependencies affecting the project including input required from Natural England, and your proposals for how these will be managed and mitigated.Provide a brief description of how the work will be quality assured.Provide a detailed timetable for how the projected deliverables will be delivered. |

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| **Key Personnel** | Detailed Evaluation Criteria |
| Q3 Experience of the Project Team***Minimum score threshold below 50 will apply.*** | Provide details of the project team and the key personnel, with their seniority, who will be involved in delivering the project. You should demonstrate the team’s knowledge and experience in:* Nature-based Solutions specifically RBS and developing nutrient reduction methodologies
* Delivering contracts for public sector clients, particularly contracts with an environmental focus.

Please indicate a CV and the number of days each member of the team has allocated on this project as well as who will lead on each task. In addition, please provide an example of your current or previous work within government departments, wider public sector, or equivalent that are similar in subject matter or scope to this requirement. |

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| **Commercial Model** | Detailed Evaluation Criteria |
| Q4 Cost of whole life of proposed contract | Provide a quote detailing the exact amount this contract will cost, include costs for each section/action that may incur cost, e.g., staff time, lab analysis etc. |

**Commercial (**40**%)**

The Contract is to be awarded as a **fixed price** which will be paid according to the completion of the deliverables stated in the Specification of Requirements.

Suppliers are required to submit a total cost to provide the deliverables stated in the Specification of Requirements. In addition to this the Commercial Response template must be completed to provide a breakdown of the whole life costs against **each deliverable** used in the delivery of this requirement.

Calculation Method

The method for calculating the weighted scores is as follows:

Commercial

Score = (Lowest Quotation Price / Supplier’s Quotation Price ) x **40%**  (Maximum available marks)

Technical

Score = (Bidder’s Total Technical Score / Highest Technical Score) x **60%**  (Maximum available marks)

The total score (weighted) (TWS) is then calculated by adding the total weighted commercial score (WC) to the total weighted technical score (WT): WC + WT = TWS.

**Information to be returned**

Please note, the following information requested must be provided. Incomplete tender submissions may be discounted.

Please complete and return the following information:

* completed Commercial Response template
* separate response submission for each technical question (in accordance with the response instructions)
* completed Mandatory Requirements (Annex 1)
* completed Acceptance of Terms and Conditions (Annex 2)

**Award**

Once the evaluation of the Response(s) is complete all suppliers will be notified of the outcome via email.

**The successful supplier will be issued the contract, incorporating their Response, for signature. The Authority will then counter sign.**

**Annex 1 Mandatory Requirements**

**Part 1 Potential Supplier Information**

Please answer the following self-declaration questions in full and include this Annex in your quotation response.

**Part 1.1 Potential Supplier Information:**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Question no. | Question | Response |
| 1.1(a) | Full name of the potential supplier submitting the information |  |
| 1.1(b)  | Registered office address (if applicable) |  |
| 1.1(c) | Company registration number (if applicable) |  |
| 1.1(d) | Charity registration number (if applicable) |  |
| 1.1(e) | Head office DUNS number (if applicable) |  |
| 1.1(f) | Registered VAT number  |  |
| 1.1(g) | Are you a Small, Medium or Micro Enterprise (SME)? | (Yes / No) |

Note: See EU definition of SME <https://ec.europa.eu/growth/smes/business-friendly-environment/sme-definition_en>

**Part 1.2 Contact details and declaration**

By submitting a quotation to this RFQ I declare that to the best of my knowledge the answers submitted and information contained in this document are correct and accurate.

I declare that, upon request and without delay you will provide the certificates or documentary evidence referred to in this document.

I understand that the information will be used in the selection process to assess my organisation’s suitability to be invited to participate further in this procurement.

I understand that the authority may reject this submission in its entirety if there is a failure to answer all the relevant questions fully, or if false/misleading information or content is provided in any section.

I am aware of the consequences of serious misrepresentation.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Question no.  | Question | Response |
| 1.2(a) | Contact name |  |
| 1.2(b) | Name of organisation |  |
| 1.2(c) | Role in organisation |  |
| 1.2(d) | Phone number |  |
| 1.2(e) | E-mail address  |  |
| 1.2(f) | Postal address |  |
| 1.2(g) | Signature (electronic is acceptable) |  |
| 1.2(h) | Date |  |

**Part 2 Exclusion Grounds**

**Part 2.1 Grounds for mandatory exclusion**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Question no.  | Question | Response |
| 2.1(a) | Please indicate if, within the past five years you, your organisation or any other person who has powers of representation, decision or control in the organisation been convicted anywhere in the world of any of the offences within the summary below. |
|  | Participation in a criminal organisation.  | (Yes / No)If yes please provide details at 2.1 (b) |
|  | Corruption.  | ((Yes / No)If yes please provide details at 2.1 (b) |
|  | Fraud.  | (Yes / No)If yes please provide details at 2.1 (b) |
|  | Terrorist offences or offences linked to terrorist activities | (Yes / No)If yes please provide details at 2.1 (b) |
|  | Money laundering or terrorist financing | (Yes / No)If yes please provide details at 2.1 (b) |
|  | Child labour and other forms of trafficking in human beings | (Yes / No)If yes please provide details at 2.1 (b) |
| 2.1(b) | If you have answered yes to question 2.1(a), please provide further details.Date of conviction, specify which of the grounds listed the conviction was for, and the reasons for conviction.Identity of who has been convictedIf the relevant documentation is available electronically please provide the web address, issuing authority, precise reference of the documents. |  |
| 2.1 (c) | If you have answered Yes to any of the points above have measures been taken to demonstrate the reliability of the organisation despite the existence of a relevant ground for exclusion? (i.e. Self-Cleaning) | (Yes / No) |
| 2.1(d) | Has it been established, for your organisation by a judicial or administrative decision having final and binding effect in accordance with the legal provisions of any part of the United Kingdom or the legal provisions of the country in which the organisation is established (if outside the UK), that the organisation is in breach of obligations related to the payment of tax or social security contributions? | (Yes / No) |
| 2.1(e) | If you have answered yes to question 2.3(a), please provide further details. Please also confirm you have paid or have entered into a binding arrangement with a view to paying, the outstanding sum including where applicable any accrued interest and/or fines. |  |

**Part 2.2 Grounds for discretionary exclusion**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Question no.  | Question | Response |
| 2.2(a) | The detailed grounds for discretionary exclusion of an organisation are set out on this [webpage](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/551130/List_of_Mandatory_and_Discretionary_Exclusions.pdf), which should be referred to before completing these questions. Please indicate if, within the past three years, anywhere in the world any of the following situations have applied to you, your organisation or any other person who has powers of representation, decision or control in the organisation |
| 2.2(b) | Breach of environmental obligations?  | (Yes / No)If yes please provide details at 2.2 (f) |
| 2.2(c) | Breach of social obligations?  | (Yes / No)If yes please provide details at 2.2 (f) |
| 2.2(d) | Breach of labour law obligations?  | (Yes / No)If yes please provide details at 2.2 (f) |
| 2.2(e) | Shown significant or persistent deficiencies in the performance of a substantive requirement under a prior public contract, a prior contract with a contracting entity, or a prior concession contract, which led to early termination of that prior contract, damages or other comparable sanctions? | (Yes / No)If yes please provide details at 2.2 (f) |
| 2.2 (f) | If you have answered Yes to any of the above, explain what measures been taken to demonstrate the reliability of the organisation despite the existence of a relevant ground for exclusion? (Self Cleaning) |  |

**Annex 2 Acceptance of Terms and Conditions**

I/We accept in full the terms and conditions appended to this Request for Quote document.

Company \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Print Name \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Position \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_