

Expression of Interest Request for:

IT Desktop and Server Support (Managed Service)

1. Background – The Electoral Commission

The Electoral Commission is an independent body set up by the UK Parliament under the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000 (PPERA). The Commission's aim is to promote integrity and public confidence in the UK's democratic process, through the regulation of party and election finance, and setting the standards for well-run elections.

The Commission has up to 250 staff across the UK during peak periods of activity. The majority of staff are based at the Commission's main London office, with the remainder located in smaller devolved offices in Belfast, Cardiff and Edinburgh, together with a number of permanent homeworkers.

2. Expression of Interest Overview

Service Name: IT Desktop and Server Support (Managed Service)

The Electoral Commission Project Reference: WP081

Agreement Term: 3 years, with a potential 1+1 extension

Estimated Value: approx. £505,000 including VAT (over a 5-year period)

The Authority requires confirmation on your intention to participate in the procurement exercise for the services detailed below. Any supplier that does not respond to this EOI within the stipulated timescales exclude themselves from the bidding process for this project. Please confirm if you are interested in bidding for this opportunity by following the instructions in section 5. Please note, a formal tender response in the form of project proposal is not required at this stage.

The following is an indicative procurement timeline that we aim to follow. Please note that the Commission reserves the right to modify this timeline.

Activity	Date
Publish EOI	02/07/2025
EOI Response Deadline	15/07/2025
Publish Invitation to Tender	28/07/2025
Tender Submission Deadline	08/08/2025
Award Contract	September 2025

Please note that this is provisional timetable and we reserve the right to deviate from it.

3. Specification Overview: IT Desktop and Server Support (Managed Service)

The purposes are to procure an external service to manage the Commission's IT desktop and server infrastructures, SharePoint Online, Microsoft Azure consumption, and to provide technical assistance and consultancy when required. This arrangement reflects our hybrid business model, where IT services are delivered by a core internal IT team, supported by specialist managed services provided by a small number of trusted external IT partners.

The scope of the services we require cover:

1. Support for the Commission's laptop computer and Azure virtual desktop infrastructure.
2. Microsoft Azure consumption and optimisation.
3. Support for the Commission's Azure Cloud server infrastructure, and its operational and disaster recovery environments.
4. Provision of the Commission's Acronis data backup and restore capability, and remote assistance tool.
5. Support for SharePoint Online, which is used to host the Commission's intranet and document management solution.
6. Change management.
7. Provision of technical assistance and consultancy services to meet ad hoc requirements.
8. Support arrangements – Service Level Agreements and Reporting.
9. Onboarding of the managed service by the end of September 2025 to ensure service continuity.

Please note, this is a high-level overview of the requirements, further details will be provided at the ITT stage.

The following areas are not covered within the scope of requirements:

- The management of the Commission's Microsoft Defender Security solution, although this service may be required in the future.
- The provision of a cyber security managed service.
- The provision of a network infrastructure managed service.

The IT desktop service will include the advanced monitoring and maintenance of our technology environment. For example, the patching of the Dell laptop computers (with Windows 11) that we use and the small number of Azure Virtual Desktop (AVD) sessions that we need to maintain e.g. to access legacy applications. This service must also provide and manage our Microsoft Azure consumption, and optimise our costs where possible.

The Commission uses a Microsoft Azure Cloud server infrastructure, with its operational and disaster recovery (DR) environments hosted in different geographical locations.

Acronis is used to provide our data backup and restore capability. The managed service will need to look after this infrastructure, including the monitoring of our Cloud infrastructure, server operating system (OS) patch management, database support and capacity management.

The supplier must support the Commission's DR capability, including annual DR testing, and invoking the DR capability/restoring operational services if required.

It is essential that:

- The supplier provides UK based support, although they must be able to provide 24x7x52 availability and monitoring.
- The Commission's data is stored securely in the UK and complies with UK Data Protection legislation.
- The supplier is an Acronis Platinum Partner.
- The supplier has ISO 27001:2022 accreditation.

The Commission uses external suppliers to manage its cyber security and network infrastructure. The supplier must be able to demonstrate its ability to liaise professionally with other managed service providers if required.

The supplier must provide professional services to support the onboarding of the managed service.

Service Level Agreements must be in place, describing the supplier's support priority levels and response times, and how the Commission should grade its incidents/calls. The supplier must provide monthly performance reports, to include support utilisation, SLA percentage, and relevant analytics.

The Commission require a named account manager, and the supplier must provide monthly performance meetings and quarterly business review meetings. This is to ensure that the Commission can raise any queries or concerns they may have in a timely and effective manner.

The Commission will need to onboard the managed service by the end of September 2025.

4. Right to Cancel or Vary EOI

The Electoral Commission reserves the right to:

- Cancel all or part of this EOI at any stage and at any time; and
- Amend, clarify, add to or withdraw all or any part of the EOI at any time.
- Not proceed with any tender or award
- Vary the scope of the project or framework at its discretion

5. Next Steps

If you are interested in participating in this procurement exercise, please register your interest by following the instructions below:

1. Register on the Portal

The expected invitation to tender will be published on the Electoral Commission's Procurement Portal, please register as a supplier by following this link <https://intendhost.co.uk/electoralcommission>

When registering on the portal, please ensure that you use the exact name and spelling of your organisation so that you can be located within the portal. Please do not use a different name or acronyms.

2. Contact Procurement

Once you have registered on the portal, please email confirming your intention to bid. Please ensure the email subject reads as follows: 'WP081 – IT Desktop and Server Support (Managed Service) EOI Confirmation'

Contact Details:

Email address: procurement@electoralcommission.org.uk