



**INVITATION TO TENDER (STAGE 1) – ‘ACCESS YOUR RECORDS’ SERVICE  
DEVELOPMENT**

**CPV CODE – 72222300 – INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY SERVICES**

**COMPETITIVE FLEXIBLE PROCEDURE**

**CLOSING DATE FOR ‘STAGE 1’ TENDER SUBMISSIONS – 5PM, 22 OCTOBER  
2025**

## BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The National Archives (TNA) is the official archive and publisher for the UK government, and for England and Wales. Its role is to collect and secure the future of the government record, both digital and physical, to preserve it for generations to come, and to make it as accessible and available as possible. It is based in Kew, South West London. More information on TNA can be found at [www.nationalarchives.gov.uk](http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk)

## OBJECTIVE

- 2.1 The objective of this procurement process is to source a delivery partner who will work with us in developing further the 'Access Your Records' service. We plan to award a contract for an initial 6 month period, with an extension option of up to 12 months (i.e. a maximum of 18 months in total)
- 2.2 The Access Your Records (AYR) Service offers secure online login for select government and all-access TNA users to browse and search the metadata and record content of digital records they have transferred to The National Archives with ease. They can browse or search to find individual records and view them in the browser or download them if required.
- 2.3 This service is distinct from public access services as it also provides access to records that are closed to the public if they are subject to an exemption under the Freedom of Information (FOI) Act.
- 2.4 There are many reasons why a government department may need to view previously transferred records e.g. if an FOI request has been made against a closed record or if a public inquiry or subsequent investigation relates to records already transferred to the archive.
- 2.5 AYR is following an iterative Agile development approach. All service enhancements will be planned and implemented in response to evidenced user need. We anticipate making improvements to all aspects of the service including our search, browse and view journey. There will also be things we have not yet anticipated that will emerge from user research and stakeholder engagement.
- 2.6 The current technology stack comprises: Github, AWS, Open Search, Python, Flask, GDS design system, Universal Viewer.
- 2.7 We intend to award a contract for an initial period of 6 months, with one extension option of up to 12 months. We anticipate that the maximum expenditure over the duration of the contract period (including any extension options) will be £1.2m including VAT.

## THE REQUIREMENT

- 3.1 Bidders must be able to demonstrate experience in each of the following areas:
- Back and Front-End Development expertise, including:

- Strong experience of development in Python.
- Demonstrable experience of using modern development approaches including Agile and Test-Driven development, and source control tools such as Git.
- Strong skills in the fundamental frontend technologies - HTML, CSS (including pre-processors such as SASS) and JavaScript to create clean code that is open by default and easy for others to reuse.
- Experience coding clear, usable, accessible digital interfaces that work across a range of devices and browsers, which meet WCAG 2.1 at level AA, following the principle of progressive enhancement.
- AWS infrastructure and security expertise, including:
  - Knowledge and experience of cloud computing principles, services and design patterns and the use of infrastructure-as-code.
  - Experience of good practice in cybersecurity, with knowledge of common vulnerabilities and how to prevent them. Experience of designing security improvements and embedding security controls as a core part of chosen solutions.
- User-centred design expertise, including:
  - User research: experience surveying user research participants, running usability testing sessions and feeding back insights to the development team.
  - Interaction design and content writing and design expertise: experience of writing accessible copy and creating user-centred digital content and interactions, across complex user journeys.
- Compliance with the following standards:
  - Government Service Standard
  - Technology Code of Practice
  - WCAG 2.1
  - ISO/IEC 27001
- Coaching in measuring service performance and delivery.
- Good approach to documenting as you go and knowledge sharing within the team.
- Contributing to building a positive, inclusive team culture.

## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION FOR BIDDERS

- 4.1 The appointed Supplier must comply with TNA's site security requirements and physical access arrangements for access to the Kew site when carrying out any on-site work.
- 4.2 SC-level Security Clearance or willingness to obtain SC clearance is mandatory for developing in the AYR production environment. This requires individuals to have lived in the UK for the last 3 years. The length of required residency may depend on individual circumstances.
- 4.2 TNA recognises the benefits of innovative solutions in meeting its objectives and bidders are therefore encouraged to demonstrate their commitment to deliver innovation within their tender responses.

## SOCIAL VALUE

- 5.1 TNA has identified that the Outcome 4 specified in the [Social Value Model](#) - *Sustainable procurement practices: reducing carbon footprints, minimising waste, and promoting the use of clean energy and green technologies* – is applicable to this contract, and we therefore require bidders to demonstrate how they will deliver additional environmental benefits in the performance of the contract, with a specific focus on collaborative ways of working with the supply chain, including working towards net zero carbon emissions and use of clean energy and green technologies.

## HOW TO RESPOND

- 6.1 Please submit your 'Stage 1' tender response to [procurement@nationalarchives.gov.uk](mailto:procurement@nationalarchives.gov.uk) by 5pm on 22 October 2025. If you have any clarification questions, please submit these to [procurement@nationalarchives.gov.uk](mailto:procurement@nationalarchives.gov.uk) by 5pm on 10 October 2025.
- 6.2 Your 'Stage 1' tender submission must comprise the following:
  - *A comprehensive description of your practical experience in the subject areas specified in para 3.1 of this ITT document. It is for bidders to determine what format their response should take so as to describe this experience in a clear, comprehensive and unambiguous fashion.*
  - *The relevant skills, experience and qualifications of the proposed key staff who would be involved in the delivery of the contract.*
  - *What sub-contracting arrangements (if any) you would put in place;*
- 6.3 Your 'Stage 1' tender submission must also include a description of how, in the delivery of the contract, you would meet the Social Value objectives described in para 5.1 of this ITT document. This response should be no more than 750 words in length and should describe how you will achieve the objectives, plus a description of how you plan to monitor, measure and report on the associated impacts.

## PROCUREMENT PROCESS

- 7.1 'Stage 1' Tender submissions will be evaluated applying the criteria specified in paras 8.1 to 8.3 of this document.
- 7.2 Once all of those submissions have been evaluated, the top-five-ranked bidders will be issued with a 'Stage 2' ITT document and invited to submit a 'Stage 2' Tender response.
- 7.3 A contract award decision will be made by scoring the 'Stage 2' Tender responses against the criteria specified in para 8.4 of this document.

## EVALUATION CRITERIA

- 8.1 'Stage 1' Tender submissions will be evaluated as follows:

Category	Maximum Available Unweighted Score	Weighting	Maximum Available Weighted Score
<b>Quality</b> (Response to para 6.2 of this ITT document)	10	8	80
<b>Social Value</b> (Response to para 6.3 of this ITT document)	4	5	20
<b>Total</b>			<b>100</b>

- 8.2 The criteria used to evaluate the Quality category at 'Stage 1' will be as follows:

<b>10 Points</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Bidder has provided a response that addresses all parts of the requirement</li><li>• Bidder has provided evidence to support all elements of their response</li><li>• The evidence supplied is convincing and highly relevant to the requirement</li><li>• Bidder's response is clear and easy to understand</li><li>• Where relevant, Bidder has demonstrated a high level of capability to deliver new and innovative service approaches</li></ul>
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<b>7 Points</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bidder has provided a response that addresses all parts of the requirement</li> <li>• Bidder has provided evidence to support most elements of their response</li> <li>• The evidence supplied is good and relevant to the requirement</li> <li>• Bidder's response is clear and easy to understand</li> <li>• Where relevant, Bidder has demonstrated some level of capability to deliver new and innovative service approaches</li> </ul>
<b>4 Points</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bidder has provided a response that addresses some parts of the requirement</li> <li>• Bidder has provided evidence to support some elements of their response, but not all</li> <li>• The evidence supplied has limited relevance to the requirement</li> <li>• Bidder's response is not always clear and easy to understand</li> <li>• Where relevant, Bidder has demonstrated limited capability to deliver new and innovative service approaches</li> </ul>
<b>1 Point</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bidder has provided a response that fails to address most parts of the requirement</li> <li>• Bidder has provided little or no evidence to support most elements of their response</li> <li>• The evidence supplied is very weak and has very limited relevance to the requirement</li> <li>• Bidder's response is not always clear and easy to understand</li> <li>• Where relevant, Bidder has demonstrated little or no capability to deliver new and innovative service approaches</li> </ul>

8.3 The criteria used to evaluate the Social Value category at 'Stage 1' will be as follows:

<b>4 Points</b>	<p>The response addresses <b>all</b> of the below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A specific, measurable and time-bound commitment;</li> <li>• A description of how the commitment relates to the stated Social Value outcome;</li> <li>• A description of the metrics you will use to measure your performance against the commitment;</li> <li>• A description of how you will collaborate with TNA to deliver the stated Social Value outcome.</li> </ul>
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<b>2 Points</b>	<p>The response addresses only <b>some</b> of the below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A specific, measurable and time-bound commitment;</li> <li>• A description of how the commitment relates to the stated Social Value outcome;</li> <li>• A description of the metrics you will use to measure your performance against the commitment;</li> <li>• A description of how you will collaborate with TNA to deliver the stated Social Value outcome.</li> </ul>
<b>0 Points</b>	<p>The response addresses <b>none</b> of the below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A specific, measurable and time-bound commitment;</li> <li>• A description of how the commitment relates to the stated Social Value outcome;</li> <li>• A description of the metrics you will use to measure your performance against the commitment;</li> <li>• A description of how you will collaborate with TNA to deliver the stated Social Value outcome.</li> </ul>

8.4 The criteria used to evaluate 'Stage 2' Tender submissions will be as follows:

Category	Maximum Available Unweighted Score	Weighting	Maximum Available Weighted Score
Quality	10	6	60
Price	10	3	30
Social Value	4	2.5	10
Total			<b>100</b>

## CONTRACT TERMS

9.1 The Mid-Tier Contract terms published at [The Mid-Tier Contract - Core Terms - GOV.UK](#) shall apply to this contract.

## PROCUREMENT TIMETABLE

<b>Publication of Tender Notice</b>	22 September 2025
<b>Deadline for Submission of Clarification Questions</b>	5pm, 10 October 2025

<b>Deadline for Receipt of 'Stage 1' Tender Submissions</b>	5pm, 22 October 2025
<b>'Stage 2' Tender Submissions Evaluated and Top Five Ranked Bidders Identified</b>	w/c 27 October 2025
<b>'Stage 2' ITT Documentation issued to Top Five Ranked Bidders</b>	w/c 3 November 2025
<b>Deadline for Receipt of 'Stage 2' Tender Submissions</b>	5pm, 1 December 2025
<b>Assessment Summaries Issued to all Bidders</b>	w/c 8 December 2025
<b>Publication of Contract Award Notice</b>	w/c 8 December 2025
<b>End of Standstill Period</b>	w/c 22 December 2025