REQUEST FOR INFORMATION

REFERENCE NO: UKEF 0641

CUSTOMER: The Secretary of State acting through the Export Credits Guarantee Department (operating as UK Export Finance) (the Authority)

START DATE: 17 Jul 25

DATE RESPONSE REQUIRED: 01 Aug 25

Dear Potential Provider,

This Request for Information (RFI) seeks information relating to the establishing of a framework for a General Aerospace Legal Panel. This framework will consist of between 4 and 6 suppliers who are able to provide specialist legal advice and services in connection with support provided by the Authority in respect of the export of aircraft, aircraft engines and other aerospace assets and services. This includes but is not limited to the following areas in respect of these aerospace workstreams: financing aerospace assets, services and projects, Export Credit Agency (ECA) financing, international law and jurisdictional advice and the Authority's statutory framework.

The full specification for the existing contract servicing the Authority's equivalent requirements (the Previous Contract) can be found at the following link: https://www.contractsfinder.service.gov.uk/Notice/79ba6a54-126b-4178-a49d-737ae2f8bbc8

Whilst the Authority is currently developing the specification for the new contract, the scope of requirements detailed in framework schedule 1, paragraph 6 are likely to remain broadly the same and so can be used as a guide for this RFI process.

CURRENT SITUATION

The Authority currently is looking to re-let this framework using the Competitive Flexible Procedure in the Procurement Act 2023. The Authority is currently developing the specification and Invitation to Tender documentation and is seeking the input of legal service providers actively engaged in servicing relevant sectors of the finance market (Industry) to refine this documentation.

Potential Providers should note that this requirement is separate from the existing joint legal panel, conducted in conjunction with the French and German export credit agencies, in respect of financing transactions for Airbus aircraft which was established in April 2021.

WHAT WE ARE LOOKING FOR

The purpose of this initial market sounding exercise is to raise market awareness and to share information on the potential procurement, with the view to gather feedback and, if necessary, undertake further engagement with the market on the scope and approach; and to enable the Authority to determine the detailed design of the procurement and commercial process.

This engagement is designed to test the market's capacity and capability to deliver the requirement as currently described, consider if any changes to the requirement would increase market appetite whilst still delivering the capabilities needed, and to generate market interest.

These activities are focusing on the market as a whole, rather than the merits of individual Potential Providers. It includes no element of Potential Provider selection or bid evaluation. There is no commitment of any kind inferred by either party.

The Authority is looking for Industry feedback on the following areas[1]:

1. Is the outline brief of the opportunity attractive to the Potential Provider? What steps could the Authority undertake to make such a requirement more attractive?
2. These accreditations will be required as part of the framework, please confirm if the Potential Provider currently holds these? If not, would the Potential Provider be willing to obtain these?
    a. Cyber Essentials Plus or equivalent
    b. Professional Indemnity Insurance
    c. Public Liability Insurance
    d. Employer's Liability Insurance
3. How would the Potential Provider seek to service the contract?
    a. Does access to local law firms globally cause any particular issues for the Potential Provider?
    b. If so, please provide examples of where these could be provided?
4. PPN 002 outlines the Government's commitment to Social Value in its contracts. How does the Potential Provider demonstrate their commitment to Social Value? I.e. which of the key themes is incorporated into bids and/or contracts?

    Please refer to Appendix A for more detail on the Social Value Model and the key themes.
5. The Authority proposes to include unlimited liability on Potential Providers for certain types of loss (including, without limitation, as a result of negligent professional advice) as part of the framework terms, in line with the Previous Contract.
    a. Does this present a barrier to Potential Providers?

[1] Answers should be limited to a maximum of one side of A4 per question using Ariel 11.

   b. Are you able to provide an indication of the level of professional indemnity insurance which your firm, as a Potential Provider, carries (£0-50m, £51m-100m, £101m-150m, £151m-200m, £201m+)?

6. Does the Potential Provider consider that there might be any major pit falls, issues or risks with the requirement, based on the current market?
7. Does the Potential Provider have experience in working with or advising an Export Credit Agency or public financial institution? Please give details.
8. Does the Potential Provider have a dedicated aerospace/aircraft finance team with specialist aerospace/aircraft finance lawyers? Please give details
9. If you were involved at any stage of the Previous Contract (whether bidding for a place on that panel, or as a panel law firm) do you have any comments on the procedure for selecting the panel and/or the operation of the panel once established?
10. Are there any general suggestions or comments in relation to the outline requirement or process which the Potential Provider would like to share at this time?

ABOUT THE AUTHORITY

UK Export Finance (UKEF) is a UK government ministerial department and the nation's export credit agency (ECA). The Authority helps exporters access working capital and manage the risk of not getting paid by offering a government guarantee. The Authority partners with private sector finance providers to grow UK exports and international trade. UKEF supports companies of all sizes and sectors across the UK.

The Authority's Mission is to: 'advance prosperity by ensuring no viable UK export fails for lack of finance or insurance, doing that sustainably and at no net cost to the taxpayer.'
Further information can be found about the department on their website: https://www.ukexportfinance.gov.uk

ATTACHMENTS

- Appendix A - PPN 002 Social Value Model

OUR EXPECTED TIMETABLE

DATE	ACTIVITY
17 Jul 25	Publication of Preliminary Market Engagement Notice and associated RFI.
17 Jul 25	Clarification Question period begins
25 Jul 25	Clarification Question period ends
NLT 1700hrs BST on 28 Jul 25	Authority responses to Clarification Questions published
28 Jul 25	Requests to obtain RFI documentation to be submitted
01 Aug 25	RFI Response Deadline
04 Aug 25	Authority review of RFI Responses and next steps
15 Sep 25	Estimated date of publication of UK004 Tender Notice

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POTENTIAL PROVIDER QUESTIONS AND CLARIFICATIONS

- Potential Providers may raise questions or seek clarification regarding any aspect of this RFI document at any time prior to the Clarification Period Closure, as detailed in 'our expected timeline'. Questions must be submitted via email to commercial@ukexportfinance.gov.uk with the ref ‘GALP RFI CQ’
- To ensure that all Potential Providers have equal access to information regarding this Procurement, responses to questions raised by Potential Providers will be published in a questions and answers document, which will be issued to all Potential Providers who have registered an interest in the RFI.
- Responses to questions will not identify the originator of the question.
- If a Potential Provider wishes to ask a question or seek clarification without the question and answer being published in this way, then the Potential Provider must notify us and provide its justification for withholding the question and any response. If the Authority does not consider that there is sufficient justification for withholding the question and the corresponding response, the Potential Provider will be invited to decide whether:

  - the question/clarification and the response should in fact be published; or
  - It wishes to withdraw the question/clarification.

RFI RESPONSE

- Responses to this RFI should be sent to to commercial@ukexportfinance.gov.uk with the ref 'GALP RFI Response' by no later than the RFI response deadline outlined in 'our expected timeline'.
- Responses should adhere to the limit of a maximum one page of Arial font size 11 per question.
- Responses should be submitted in a format accessible to the Authority (e.g. Microsoft Word, Excel or PDF) and should not be password protected.

GENERAL CONDITIONS

Please note the following general conditions:

- This RFI will help us to refine the requirements.
- We reserve the right not to proceed with this procurement. Nothing shall constitute a commitment to instigating a formal procurement process.
- The expected timeline sets out indicative timeframes but these, as well as actual dates, may be subject to change
- Any and all costs associated with the production of such a response either to an RFI or any resultant competition must be borne by the Potential Provider. The Authority will not contribute in any way to meeting production costs of any response.
- Information contained within this document is confidential and must not be revealed to any third party without prior written consent from us.
- No down-selection of Potential Providers will take place as a consequence of any responses or interactions relating to this RFI.
- We expect that all responses to this RFI will be provided by Potential Providers in good faith to the best of their ability in the light of information available at the time of their response.
- No information provided by a Potential Provider in response to this RFI will be carried forward, used or acknowledged in any way for the purpose of evaluating the Potential Provider, in any subsequent formal procurement process that may take place.
- Should a Potential Provider fail to respond to this RFI, it will not affect any further participation in any possible future procurement for this capability.