

REQUEST FOR QUOTES:

FOR

**MARKET RESEARCH SERVICES
TO MEASURE RESIDENT
PERCEPTIONS OF
ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES**

ISSUED 16 MAY 2022

INSTRUCTIONS FOR SUBMITTING QUOTES

Section 1 - Invitation to Submit Quotes

1. The South London Waste Partnership (the "SLWP") through the procuring authority Kingston Council (whose standard terms and conditions will be used for this procurement) invites proposals for a specialist agency to provide market research services to measure resident perceptions of environmental services.
2. It is anticipated that the contract will be awarded on 13 June 2022 with an anticipated fieldwork start date of 27 June 2022. The contract term will be for a period of four months.
3. Proposals must be received electronically via the Council's e-tendering portal system no later than **4pm, 3 June 2022**. It is entirely the responsibility of the bidder to ensure that it submits its quotation by the deadline.
4. Should a Bidder proposing to submit a proposal be in doubt as to the interpretation of any part of the tender documents, the SLWP's Communications Advisor will endeavor to answer written enquiries prior to proposals being submitted. Requests for clarification must be sent via the London Tender's Portal before 4pm, 26 May 2022. Bidders should note:
 - The Council aims to respond in a timely manner, although may need to request further information in order to respond appropriately.
 - The Council will publish on the portal, in an anonymized form, all requests for clarification and responses. The identity of bidders that submit clarification requests will not be disclosed to other bidders on the portal.
 - It is the Bidder's responsibility to review all the clarifications issued.
5. Documents included in the RFQ:
 - Specification (including Method Statement Questions and Pricing Schedule)
 - Pricing Schedule
 - Draft Terms and Conditions (T&Cs)
6. This document sets out the procedural requirements with which Bidders must comply when submitting Quotations in order for their proposal to be considered by the Council. The process has been structured in a way to:
 - assist the Council in choosing the Quotation which will be **most economically advantageous** to the Council;
 - make clear the requirements with which Bidders must comply and the basis on which the quotations will be evaluated; and

- maintain competition throughout.

Timetable

7. The SLWP requires topline findings from the survey by early August 2022 and the Findings Report in mid August 2022. The timetable below sets out how we see that being achieved.
8. There would be some flexibility with these dates and a detailed project timeline would be agreed at project inception, **but it is important that any Bidders confirm that topline findings can be provided within nine weeks of the award of contract and produce a Findings Report within 11 weeks of award of contract.**
9. Whilst the Council does not intend to depart from the timetable, it reserves the right to do so at any time.

Milestone	Date
Specification document available to Bidders	16 May 2022
Deadline for clarifications	26 May 2022 (4pm)
Proposal return deadline	3 June 2022 (4pm)
Evaluation period and internal sign off	6-10 June 2022
Award of contract	13 June 2022
Mobilisation	13 June - 4 July 2022
Fieldwork	4 July - 12 August 2022
Top line findings	15 August 2022
Findings report	29 August 2022

Preparation of proposal

10. It is the responsibility of Bidders to obtain for themselves at their own expense all information necessary for the preparation of their proposals.
11. Information supplied by the SLWP is supplied for general guidance in the preparation of the proposals. Bidders must satisfy themselves by their own investigations with regard to the accuracy of any such information and no responsibility is accepted by the SLWP for any inaccurate information obtained by Bidders.
12. All information supplied by the SLWP in connection with this invitation to submit proposals shall be regarded as confidential by the Bidder except that such information may be disclosed for the purpose of obtaining sureties and quotations necessary for the preparation of the proposal.
13. The proposal documents are and shall remain the property of the SLWP and must be returned upon demand.
14. Proposals must be submitted for the supply of the whole service upon the terms set out in the Specification and terms and conditions. Proposals for only part of the service will be rejected.
15. In addition to any more specific obligations imposed by the terms of the contract Bidders must satisfy the SLWP of their ability to provide the service set out in the contract documentation.

Submitting Proposals

16. The completed proposal shall be submitted via the London Tenders Portal Proactis: <https://procontract.due-north.com/Login> **no later than 4pm on 3 June 2022.**
17. Proposals received after the proposal submission deadline will NOT be considered for proposal evaluation.
18. The SLWP may at its own absolute discretion extend the closing date and time specified in paragraph 3 above.
19. When prompted to accept our Terms and Conditions (T&Cs), we expect you have read, understood, and are in agreement with the proposed terms. Each proposal received by the Council shall be deemed to have been made subject to the Council's Terms and Conditions (T&Cs).

Evaluation of Proposals

Table 1

Question Ref	Section	Scoring Method
Section 1	Potential Supplier Information - respond online	None - for information only
Section 2	Economic & Financial Standing - respond online	Pass/Fail
Section 3	Technical and Professional Ability - respond online	Pass/Fail
Section 4	Insurance - respond online	Pass/Fail
Section 5	Modern Slavery Act 2015: Requirements under Modern Slavery Act 2015 - respond online	Pass/Fail
Section 6	GDPR - respond online	Pass/Fail
Section 7	Form of Proposal - respond online	Pass/Fail
Section 8	Quality: Method Statement questions - respond online	Scoring as per below
Appendix B	Price: Price Matrices - respond online	Scoring as per below

20. The Selection Criteria which are included in sections **1 to 7** will be evaluated first as per Table 1. –If a “Fail” score is obtained on any of the questions designated “Pass/Fail”, this will result in the Proposal being rejected.

Economic and Financial standing

21. The evaluation of a Bidder’s Economic and Financial Standing is assessed on a pass/fail basis. The bidder will be initially required to self certify that they pass the mandated tests to meet the Council’s minimum standards relating to Economic and Financial Standing.

22. If the reports obtainable from Dun & Bradstreet do not appear to satisfy the pass/fail tests, the Preferred bidder will be required to submit additional evidence to support their quotation. If no reports and accounts are available through Dun & Bradstreet, the preferred bidder will be asked prior to confirmation of appointment to the Contract to provide evidence to support their quotation relating to one of the responses set out in due diligence online questions.

23. If selected as the preferred bidder for contract award the bidder will be required to pass these tests.

Credit Check

A credit check will be used to assess your organisation's financial standing. Wherever possible a credit check is run by Dun & Bradstreet to verify bidders confirmation (self certification) of fulfillment of the pass/fail test for economic and financial standing. Please ensure that all information is uploaded, present and correct before you apply to ensure an accurate credit check will be taken. This part of the assessment will be scored on the following basis:

Credit Rating / Risk Analysis - Range Score:

A credit check score rated as:

- "Low Overall Business Risk" =PASS
- "Low-Moderate Overall Business Risk"=PASS
- "Moderate Overall Business Risk " =PASS
- "Moderate-High Overall Business Risk"

= PASS if the contract is considered a Low risk contract to the council (the Customer) ; ie: invoice payment is done in arrears and/or it is a short term contract

= FAIL if the contract is considered High risk; ie: invoices are paid in advance and/or it is a long term contract

- "High Risk Overall Business Risk" = FAIL

Ratio Test:

The financial ratio / figures described below will be calculated using the annual accounts and if applicable other financial documents that have been provided as requested.

Current Ratio - Current Assets/ Current Liabilities

Pass = ratio of 1 and above

Fail = a ratio of below 1

Notwithstanding the above, if the Preferred Bidder has failed the tests for Economic and Financial Standing, but the Authority considers that it is in the best interests of the procurement process to allow the preferred bidder to pass the Economic and Financial Assessment and it is believed there are potential benefits to the Authority which outweigh any potential risks, the Authority reserves the right in accordance with the Authority's Contracts Regulations to report to the Authority's Section 151 officer outlining any mitigating circumstances why on this occasion the preferred bidder should pass the Economic and Financial Assessment.

If it is deemed that the financial capacity of an organisation would pose an unacceptable risk following the tests and following consultation with the Authority's Section 151 officer then the Authority reserves the right to reject their submission. The decision of the Authority's section 151 officer will be final.

Technical and Professional Ability

24. The Bidder is asked to provide details on the pro-forma supplied with the question of up to three contracts, in any combination from either the public or private sector; voluntary, charity or social enterprise (VCSE) that are relevant to our requirement. VCSEs may include samples of grant-funded work. Contracts for supplies or services should have been performed during the past three years. The named contact provided should be able to, if requested, provide written evidence to confirm the accuracy of the information provided.

Modern Slavery

25. The Bidder is required to respond to the online questions in terms of if they are a relevant commercial organisation as defined by section 54 ("Transparency in the supply chain etc") of the Modern Slavery Act 2015.

GDPR

26. The Bidder is required to confirm if they have in place, or that they will have in place by contract award, the human and technical resources to perform the contract to ensure compliance with the General Data Protection Regulation and to ensure the protection of the rights of data subjects.

Insurance

27. The Bidder is required to self-certify whether they already have, or can commit to obtain, prior to the commencement of the contract, the levels of insurance cover indicated in the supplier help box online.

Evaluation Criteria

28. The SLWP will award the Contract to the company submitting the most economically advantageous proposal taking into account the following criteria:

- a) **Price** [weighted at 40%] – the Pricing Schedule will be marked out of 100 but the overall weighting applied to Price is 40%.

The Bidder needs to demonstrate the ability to provide the services on a Value for Money basis.

Price will be evaluated using the pricing information provided by the Bidder in response to the Pricing Schedule Question, with the lowest bid (Total Price) scoring the full percentage allocated for Price and all other bidders allocated a proportional percentage using the formula:

$$\text{lowest bid} / \text{own bid} \times [40\%]$$

The total price submitted must be exclusive of VAT.

- b) **Quality** [weighted at 60%] - the Method Statement questions and their weightings are shown in the attached Specification document. The question weightings add up to 100; but the overall weighting applied to Quality is 60%.

The Bidder needs to demonstrate the ability to deliver a high quality service in all the service areas; this will be assessed on the basis of Method Statements which are designed to determine how well the bid meets the Specification requirements [see Specification document].

Quality will be evaluated by the SLWP's Communications Advisor, scoring the responses given to each Method Statement, using the following scoring methodology:

0	1	2	3	4	5
Unacceptable The information is either completely omitted or completely fails to meet the standard / requirements	Poor The information submitted has major omissions or fails to meet the standard/ requirements in more than one area.	Inadequate The information submitted has some minor omissions or demonstrates only limited compliance with requirement or fails to meet the standard in one area.	Satisfactory The information submitted meets the SLWP's requirements in demonstrating compliance with requirements	Good The information submitted provides strong evidence of compliance with requirements and exceeds the standard in one area.	Excellent The information submitted meets the standard in all aspects and exceeds the standard in more than one or all of those aspects.

29. The weighted scores for each Method Statement Question response will then be totalled and multiplied by the Quality Weighting % to provide a total score out of 60% for the Quality Section.

The Price and Quality sections will then be added together to provide the total score.

Clarification and Communication during the Proposal Period

27. Persons proposing to submit proposals are advised to ensure that they are fully familiar with the nature and extent of the obligations to be accepted by them if their proposals are accepted.
28. Should a person proposing to submit proposals be in doubt as to the interpretation of any part of the proposal documents, the contact officer listed at paragraph 4 will endeavor to answer enquiries or requests for clarification

submitted through the messaging facility via the London Tenders Portal, prior to proposals being submitted.

29. The SLWP Communications Advisor will be available during the clarification period to clarify matters relating to the contract documentation. **All requests for information or clarification must be made via the London Tenders Portal.** The Council reserves the right to disqualify any bidder who communicates outside of the portal.
30. The final date for questions and clarifications prior to the Proposal submission deadline is 26 May 2022 (4pm), as per the timetable above. Copies of clarification requests and responses will be circulated to all Bidders. As far as possible the anonymity of the originator will be preserved.
31. If a bidder considers its question to be commercially sensitive then the question must be clearly marked "In confidence – not to be circulated to other bidders" and the bidder must set out the reason for the request for non-disclosure to other bidders. The Council will consider this request but where, in the Council's opinion, it is considered that the request does not relate to commercially sensitive information the bidder will be informed that it can either withdraw the request or, if not withdrawn, the request and response will be circulated to all bidders via the Council's e-tendering system.

Bid Costs and Bid Validity period

32. Bidders are advised that all costs included in preparation and submission of bids and any other costs will be borne by them, and in no circumstances will the Council be responsible for any such costs.
33. Unless otherwise stated by the bidders, the bids shall remain valid for **90** days from the RFQ deadline. Any bids submitted for a shorter period may be rejected by the Council as failing to meet the RFQ conditions.

Right to Cancel or Vary

34. The Council reserves the right to terminate the procurement process at any time prior to award. The Council does not bind itself to accept the lowest bid, or any bids received, and reserve the right to call for new bidders should they consider this necessary. The Council shall not be liable for any costs or expenses incurred by any bidders in connection with the completion and return of the information requested in the bids Documents.
35. The Council reserves the right, at any time and at its discretion to; Cancel or withdraw from the procurement process at any stage, not to award a contract.

Conflicts of Interest

36. The Council requires any and all actual or potential conflicts of interest to be disclosed by the bidder and resolved to the Council reasonable satisfaction prior to entry of any Contract. Failure to declare and/or resolve such conflicts to the reasonable satisfaction of the Council could result in the withdrawal of the relevant award of Contract.

Non-Disclosure Agreement

37. The Council may require Bidders to complete a Non-Disclosure Agreement before releasing confidential information relating to the quotation.

Intellectual Property

38. The copyright of this RFQ is vested in the Council and may not be reproduced, copied or stored in any medium without the prior written consent of the Council except in relation to the preparation of a Quotation. All documentation supplied by the Council in relation to this RFQ is and shall remain the property of the Council and must be returned on demand, without any copies being retained.

Freedom of Information

39. To allow the Council to meet its legal responsibilities under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA), all information submitted to a public authority, such as the Council, may need to be disclosed by the Council in response to a request under the FOIA. The Council may also decide to include certain information in the publication scheme, which the Council maintains under the FOIA.
40. If a bidder considers that any of the information included in their bids' response is commercially sensitive, they should identify it and explain (in broad terms), what harm may result from disclosure if a request is received, and the time period applicable to that sensitivity.
41. Bidders should be aware that, even where they have indicated that information is commercially sensitive, the Council might be required to disclose it under the FOIA if a request is received.
42. Bidders should also note that the receipt of any material marked 'confidential' or equivalent by the Council should not be taken to mean that the Council accepts any duty of confidence by virtue of that marking.

General Data Protection Regulations

43. New data protection legislation has come into force on 25th May 2018, which aims to protect the privacy of all EU citizens and prevent data breaches.

44. In procurements for contracts involving processing personal data to be awarded, due diligence will be undertaken to ensure suppliers can implement the appropriate technical and organisational measures to comply with GDPR and to ensure the protection of the rights of data subjects.
45. A Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) may be undertaken after the contract award but prior to any processing with support from the Processor, factoring in time to consult the Information Commissioners Office (ICO) if the DPIA relates to high risk processing.

Award Process

46. Following the results of the above evaluation the Council will be in a position to award the services to the bidder with the highest final evaluation score subject to the following:
- Confirmation of the bidder's status in relation to the information provided and completion of appropriate due diligence.
 - Receipt of all necessary evidentiary documentation.
47. In the event of any material change to any of the information contained in the Quotation between the date of this Quotation and the date that the Council informs bidders of whether or not they have been selected, then the bidder shall immediately notify the Council in writing of such change.
48. The Council is entitled to revisit the selection and/or evaluation of the bidder, on the basis of any material change that has occurred, and it may exclude the bidder, if necessary, as a result of that process. Final determination of whether or not any change is material is at the Council's discretion.
49. Please note that The Council may ask for a Best and Final Offer before awarding the contract to the winning bidder.
50. Bidders shall note that any Proposal that cannot demonstrate its financial and practical sustainability in the SLWP's opinion will be rejected.
51. The SLWP is not bound to accept the lowest or any Proposal.

Debriefing Process

52. Unsuccessful Bidders will be notified in writing with feedback provided through the Council's e-tendering portal.

Contract

53. The Council expects that each bidder who submits a Quotation does so in its own name (e.g. rather than in the name of another group company, or if the bidder is a consortium, in the name of the consortium that was accepted at the

Quotation stage). If a bidder is accepted into a contract, the Council would expect that entity to enter into the relevant contract.