

UK COMMISSION FOR EMPLOYMENT AND SKILLS INVITATION TO TENDER

Evaluation of the SSC Relicensing Process Survey

PR3 POXX DB

1 GENERAL

- 1.1 You should read the "Submission of Applications" instructions before responding to this invitation to tender, which are available on the UK Commission for Employment and Skills (UK Commission) website www.ukces.org.uk.
- 1.2 If you have completed a pre-qualification questionnaire or tender within the last eighteen months you are not required to complete section 3 (Basic Details of your Organisation) in full. Please state the reference number which you previously submitted a PQQ or tender for and submit any changes to the information previously supplied, including updates to your financial standing.

2 SPECIFICATION AND REQUIREMENTS

Summary

The UK Commission for Employment and Skills wishes to carry out an evaluation of its Sector Skills Council Relicensing Programme and is seeking an organisation to design, conduct, analyse and write a report on a survey of approximately 350 people using a combination of online surveys and telephone interviews.

The contract will commence on 1 April 2010 and be completed by 31 July 2010.

2.1 BACKGROUND TO THE UK COMMISSION FOR EMPLOYMENT AND SKILLS

- 2.1.1 Launched on 1 April 2008, the UK Commission for Employment and Skills was a key recommendation in Lord Leitch's 2006 review *Prosperity for All in the Global Economy: World Class Skills*. Primarily advisory in nature, the UK Commission for Employment and Skills is an employer-led organisation, with Commissioners drawn from the highest levels of private, public and voluntary organisations, supported by leaders from trades unions and learning providers.
- 2.1.2 The UK Commission aims to raise prosperity and opportunity by helping to create world class employment and skills systems in the four nations of the UK. To achieve this, the UK Commission provides independent advice to the highest levels of the UK Government on improving employment and skills in the context of a fast-changing global economy.
- 2.1.3 One of the UK Commission's first tasks was to manage the relicensing of 25 Sector Skills Councils (SSCs). Relicensing contributes to one of the UK Commission's key strategic priorities - raising employer ambition, engagement and investment in skills. The relicensing process started in September 2008 and is now largely complete. Further information on SSCs and the relicensing process can be found at <http://www.ukces.org.uk/sector-skills-councils/>

2.2 BACKGROUND TO THE SPECIFICATION

- 2.2.1 As the relicensing process draws to a conclusion the UK Commission has committed to undertake an evaluation of the SSC Relicensing process.

UK COMMISSION FOR EMPLOYMENT AND SKILLS INVITATION TO TENDER

Evaluation of the SSC Relicensing Process Survey

PR3 POXX DB

2.2.2 The overall aim of the evaluation exercise is to identify ways to improve the approaches and processes used to manage UK Commission/SSC interactions and support performance improvement of the SSC network.

2.2.3 The objectives of the evaluation are:

- a) To establish if the SSC Relicensing process was delivered in a efficient and effective manner and to identify any areas where it could have been improved. More specifically:

To establish whether the process was:

- well managed
- delivered according to plan
- well communicated
- a cost effective and efficient use of resources

To establish if Sector Skills Councils and stakeholders believe the process was delivered in accordance with its published objectives to:

- be transparent and fair
- be built on and recognised good practice developed over the last five years;
- not be a long drawn out process for each SSC;
- balance the need for rigour in the assessment and the need to minimise the burden of the process;
- allow an SSC performing at a high level and which submitted a compelling relicensing proposition, to receive its new licence within 6 months of submitting a portfolio of evidence.

- b) To identify what benefits/impacts (if any) SSCs derived from the SSC Relicensing process both as a result of preparation for relicensing, the process of assessment itself and as a consequence of the relicensing decision.

- c) To establish to what extent SSCs and stakeholders believe the remit of SSCs is clearer and better understood as a result of the SSC Relicensing Process.

2.3 SPECIFICATION

2.3.1 The evaluation process has recently started and will conclude with the publication of an evaluation report in August 2010.

2.3.2 The UK Commission for Employment and Skills now requires an organisation to help with the design, implementation and analysis of stakeholder surveys as outlined below:

2.3.2.1 Design questionnaires, in consultation with the UK Commission, that address the objectives of the evaluation set out in 2.2.3 above.

We envisage different questionnaires are likely to be needed for Sector Skills Councils and other stakeholders and would expect the questions to consist of predominantly closed questions with a smaller number of open ended questions.

2.3.3 Agree, in consultation with the UK Commission, an appropriate sample of individuals and organisations to be surveyed for the evaluation:

- Sector Skills Councils: At this stage we envisage all Chairs, Chief Executives

UK COMMISSION FOR EMPLOYMENT AND SKILLS INVITATION TO TENDER

Evaluation of the SSC Relicensing Process Survey

PR3 POXX DB

and a small number of other staff members and board members from each of the 25 SSCs being surveyed (maximum of 150 individuals in total).

- Wider Stakeholders: Senior representatives from the following will also need to be surveyed: Government officials across the four nations and sponsor departments, employer organisations (CBI, IOD, TUC, British Chambers of Commerce, Business Council for Industry, Federation of Small Businesses, CIPD), UK Commission's Commissioners, the National Audit Office, awarding bodies and National Stakeholders including Regional Development Agencies, QCA and LSC (maximum of 100 individuals in total)
- Employers: In addition to the above we would also like to understand some employer's views of the relicensing process as they are the main stakeholders of SSCs. The successful Tendering Organisation will be required to work with the UK Commission to identify the most appropriate way of addressing this requirement. We envisage no more than 100 individuals being contacted for this part of the survey and the UK Commission will provide contact details for these employers to the successful Tendering Organisation.

Many of the individuals who will be contacted as part of the evaluation are senior figures in their respective fields and the approach taken to the evaluation should take this into account.

- 2.3.4 Conduct surveys using a combination of online methods and telephone interviews. In order to minimise the cost of the evaluation we would expect online surveying to form the predominant method of surveying, however, tenderers should set out the approach they will take to ensure good response rates and also set out where telephone interviews would be a more appropriate method of contact.
- 2.3.5 Conduct small case studies with 4 or 5 Sector Skills Councils to gain a richer insight into their experiences of the relicensing process. These are intended to provide snapshots of the experiences of particular SSCs.
- 2.3.6 Undertake an analysis of the data gathered through the various methods. The UK Commission will also provide a summary of some desktop research it has carried out on the minutes of relicensing meetings and correspondence which provide some Sector Skills Council views on the relicensing process to feed into this analysis.
- 2.3.7 Write and agree with the UK Commission both a draft and a final report and a shorter key findings summary report.
- 2.3.8 In the tender response the Tendering Organisation should:
 - Clearly outline the approach, processes and techniques they would use to successfully carry out this work including the most appropriate method for surveying the different parts of the sample
 - Provide a detailed work schedule for the whole project
 - Provide costings for the work which are broken down against the key stages.
 - The costs of completing the case studies should be set out separately from the rest of the work. The UK Commission may choose not include the case study element in the final scope of the evaluation and will notify this to the successful tendering organisation prior to award of the contract for this work.

UK COMMISSION FOR EMPLOYMENT AND SKILLS

INVITATION TO TENDER

Evaluation of the SSC Relicensing Process Survey

PR3 POXX DB

- Outline the Tendering organisation's relevant qualifications and experience and in particular the qualifications and experience of the team that will be assigned to this project.

2.3.9 Should Tendering organisations feel a different approach is required to that set out in this specification then their tender response should outline the alternative approach and the rationale for it. However, it is important that any alternative approach enables the evaluation to be completed within the required timescales and without significant deviation to costs.

2.4 ISSUES

2.4.1 Not all Sector Skills Councils were recommended for relicensing and this needs to be taken into account when analysing response to the questionnaires.

2.4.2 Due to particular circumstances 1 Sector Skills Council will still be in the process of being assessed for relicensing with a conclusion not expected until September 2010. This will need to be taken into account when designing the questionnaires and soliciting responses from employers and stakeholders.

2.4.3 A General Election will be called at some stage during this project and the successful tendering organisation will need to work with the UK Commission to identify if this is likely to impact upon the project and make contingency plans where appropriate.

2.5 OUTPUTS

2.5.1 Two reports are required as outputs from the project; a main report and a separate shorter key findings summary report.

2.6 PROJECT MANAGEMENT

2.6.1 The Project will be managed by a member of the Employer Engagement Directorate at the UK Commission for Employment and Skills.

2.6.2 Fortnightly project updates will be required by the UK Commission's Project Manager.

2.6.3 The successful tendering organisation will be required to attend an initial project set-up meeting in Wath-Upon-Deerne during the week commencing 6 April 2010. Tendering organisations should also allow for up to 2 further project update meetings with the UK Commission for Employment and Skills staff in Wath-upon-Deerne.

2.6.4 A Steering Group has been formed to agree the Terms of Reference for the evaluation and monitor high level progress. This group consists of representatives from the UK Commission's SSC Committee, Department for Business Innovation and Skills, Sector Skills Councils and the National Audit Office. This group is likely to meet twice during the project in London. The successful tendering organisation may be required to attend these meetings and provide an update on progress to the Steering Group.

2.7 TIMING

2.7.1 An indicative schedule for activities is set out below. The dates in **bold** are fixed and tendering organisations are required to design a detailed work schedule around these dates.

UK COMMISSION FOR EMPLOYMENT AND SKILLS INVITATION TO TENDER

Evaluation of the SSC Relicensing Process Survey

PR3 POXX DB

Project set-up meeting	w/c 6 April 2010
Questionnaire design, validation, testing & interview scheduling	6 - 24 April 2010
Survey and interview period	27 April - 29 May 2010
Data analysis and Report write up	01 to 26 June 2010
First draft report available	26 June 2010
Evaluation Steering Group review first draft of report and provide comment	3 July
Finalise Report and produce Executive Summary Report	21 July
Final Report and Executive Summary Report available send to UK Commission SSC Committee	12 August
SSC Committee sign off final report	19 August
Publication of final report	31 August

3 CONTRACT AND TENDER PERIODS

You agree that the contents of the tender will remain valid for a period of 6 months from the closing date for submission of the tender.

4 TIMETABLE

The following timetable will apply for this tender

**UK COMMISSION FOR EMPLOYMENT AND SKILLS
INVITATION TO TENDER**

Evaluation of the SSC Relicensing Process Survey

PR3 POXX DB

Activity	Planned Completion Date
Invitation to tender (ITT) sent out	9 March 2010
Closing date for questions on the ITT	11 March 2010
Closing date for UK Commission to respond to questions	15 March 2010
Closing date for submission of tenders	Noon 23 March 2010
UK Commission tender shortlisting of tenders	23 March 2010
Shortlisted tenderers invited to interview	25 March 2010
Shortlisted tenderers to present to UK Commission SSC Relicensing Evaluation Steering Group (in London)	31 March 2010
Chosen supplier invited to finalise contract	1 April 2010
Unsuccessful Tenderers notified & debriefed if requested	w/c 6 April 2010
Commencement of delivery	w/c 6 April 2010
Completion of delivery	31 July 2010

In the event that contractual terms cannot be finalised with the Tenderer selected, the UK Commission reserves the right to select an alternative. You will be notified if not successful when the UK Commission has made its final choice of supplier and finalised contractual terms.

UK COMMISSION FOR EMPLOYMENT AND SKILLS INVITATION TO TENDER

Evaluation of the SSC Relicensing Process Survey

PR3 POXX DB

FORMAT OF TENDERS AND GUIDANCE ON CONTENT YOU WILL NEED TO PREPARE YOUR TENDER FOLLOWING THE FORMAT OF SECTIONS BELOW.

1 TABLE OF CONTENTS

- 1.1 You will produce an index to aid navigation through the tender document. The table of contents will refer to the following sections and sub-sections and the main tender document will address all of the points required below.

2 MANAGEMENT SUMMARY

- 2.1 You will produce an overall statement, of approximately 1 page, which concisely brings together all of the key points made throughout the detailed tender documentation.

3 BASIC DETAILS OF YOUR ORGANISATION

Please complete this section and include it within your tender. Please update this section if you have not previously provided us with this information in the past 18 months.

Company Name		
Address Line#1		
Address Line#2		
Address Line#3		
Post Code		Website

	Contact 1	Contact 2	Contact 3
Contact Name / Job Title			
Contact Telephone			
Contact E-mail			

Please put an **x** against the boxes that apply to you.

Company Status:

1	Sole Trader	<input type="checkbox"/>
2	Partnership	<input type="checkbox"/>
3	Limited Liability Partnership	<input type="checkbox"/>
4	Private-Limited by Shares	<input type="checkbox"/>
5	Public Limited Company	<input type="checkbox"/>
6	Private-Limited by Guarantee	<input type="checkbox"/>

Company Type

15	Commercial Trading Company	<input type="checkbox"/>
16	Sector Skills Council	<input type="checkbox"/>
17	Standards Setting Body	<input type="checkbox"/>
18	Awarding Body	<input type="checkbox"/>
19	Government	<input type="checkbox"/>
20	Other (Please Specify)	<input type="checkbox"/>

**UK COMMISSION FOR EMPLOYMENT AND SKILLS
INVITATION TO TENDER**

Evaluation of the SSC Relicensing Process Survey

PR3 POXX DB

7	Charity	
8	Other (Please Specify)	

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Company Size

9	Up to 50 Employees	
10	51 to 250 Employees	
11	Over 250 Employees	
12	Annual Turnover up to £5.6m	
13	Annual Turnover up to £11.2m	
14	Annual Turnover over £11.2m	

Trading Relationship with UKCES

21	Goods	
22	Services	
23	Funding	
24	Other (Please Specify)	

VAT Registration Number	Company Registration Number	Charity Number
Date of registration	Date of registration	Date of registration

Bankers (Branch address)

Bank Name		
Contact Name		
Address Line#1		
Address Line#2		
Address Line#3		
Post Code		Website

Ultimate Parent Company (if applicable)

Name		
Address Line#1		
Address Line#2		
Address Line#3		
Post Code		Website

**UK COMMISSION FOR EMPLOYMENT AND SKILLS
INVITATION TO TENDER**

**Evaluation of the SSC Relicensing Process Survey PR3 POXX DB
4 FINANCIAL AND COMMERCIAL CRITERIA (PASS OR FAIL)**

Please complete this section and include it within your tender.

	How many years have you been trading?		
	What was your actual turnover in the last 2 financial years?	y/e turnover	y/e turnover
	What was your actual trading result in the last 2 financial years? (profit/loss)	y/e profit/loss	y/e profit/loss
	What were your balance sheet total reserves in the last 2 financial years?	y/e Reserves	y/e Reserves
	If asked would you be able to provide at least one of the following:		
	A copy of your most recent audited accounts.	Yes / No	
	A statement of your turnover, profit and loss account and cash flow for the current year of trading.	Yes / No	
	During the last financial year which single organisation or group was your primary customer? What percentage of your annual turnover did this customer account for?	Name:	%:
	Has your organisation met the terms of its banking facilities and loan agreements (if any) during the past 12 months?	Yes No No such terms	
	If "No" what were the reasons and what has been done to put things right?		
	Has your organisation met all its obligations to pay its creditors and staff during the past 12 months?	Yes / No	
	If "No" what were the reasons and what has been done to put things right?		
	Are you currently involved in any legal disputes or are any pending?	Yes / No	
	Have you had any judgements against you for which reparation, compensation or costs are still outstanding?	Yes / No	
	If "Yes" give brief details – sufficient not to prejudice the legal process.		

INSURANCE

Please record the value of insurance cover for current policies where payments are up to date.

**UK COMMISSION FOR EMPLOYMENT AND SKILLS
INVITATION TO TENDER**

Evaluation of the SSC Relicensing Process Survey

PR3 POXX DB

	Value of Employers Liability insurance cover	
	Value of Public Liability insurance cover	
	Value of Professional Indemnity insurance cover	
	Value of other cover. Please provide details	

5 MEETING THE SPECIFICATION

You will produce a comprehensive but concise document that demonstrates how you will be able to fulfil the requirements of the specification. In particular, the tender will be evaluated with due regard to the following sub-sections. Please note that the order in which the evaluation criteria are listed does not imply relative importance.

5.1 POLICIES AND PROCEDURES CRITERIA (5% OF THE TOTAL SCORE)

Please complete this section and include it within your tender

	Does your organisation have a written equal opportunities and diversity policy that is communicated to your staff?	Yes / No
	Does your organisation have a written health and safety at work policy that is communicated to your staff?	Yes / No
	Does your organisation operate health and safety at work systems and procedures?	Yes / No
	Does your organisation have written environmental management and sustainability policy or operate environmental management systems and procedures?	Yes / No
	Does your organisation have written risk management policy or operate risk management systems and procedures?	Yes / No
	Does your organisation hold a recognised quality management certification for example BS/EN/ISO 9000 or equivalent?	Yes / No
	If not, does your organisation have quality assurance system or procedures?	Yes / No
	Does your organisation have Investors in People (IiP) accreditation?	Yes / No
	Does your organisation have a policy on training or workforce development?	Yes / No
	What is your organisation's staff turnover?	0-10% 10-20% Over 20%

**UK COMMISSION FOR EMPLOYMENT AND SKILLS
INVITATION TO TENDER**

Evaluation of the SSC Relicensing Process Survey

PR3 POXX DB

	If you have answered “No” to any of the above, can you describe for each “No” response how you manage your organisation and staff in the absence of the policy, system or procedure?
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5.2 QUALITY CRITERIA (60% OF THE TOTAL SCORE)

The format of your response is at your discretion, but will cover the following.

- 5.2.1 Understanding of the requirements particular to delivering the specification. – 10%
- 5.2.2 Assessment of the resources required to enable delivery and availability – indicating that sufficient numbers of appropriately skilled staff will be available until final delivery, including contingency for unexpected delays etc. – 10%
- 5.2.3 Experience – being able to demonstrate a successful track record with similar contracts -10%.
- 5.2.4 Assessment of particular strengths that you have to deliver the specification – 15%.
- 5.2.5 Quality assurance – how the quality of final delivery will be guaranteed, both as a final product and throughout the course of the activities – 10%
- 5.2.6 Management Structure – how the contract will be administered – 5%. This will include details of
 - any dedicated key staff; names, qualifications and experience;
 - ability to demonstrate continuity of supply in the event of absences and staff turnover;
 - points of contact and names of persons responsible and accountable for delivery.

5.3 PRICE (35% OF THE TOTAL SCORE)

The format of your response is at your discretion.

Cost of delivery – production of a price for delivery of the output (all costs are to be prepared inclusive of VAT).

5.4 REFERENCES

These references must be external to the UK Commission. Please provide details of three recent contracts that are relevant to the UK Commission’s requirement. Where possible at least one should be from the public sector. If you cannot provide three references, please explain why.

	Reference 1	Reference 2	Reference 3
Customer Organisation:			
Customer Contact Name and Phone Number:			
Date Contract Awarded:			
Contract reference & brief description:			
Value:			

**UK COMMISSION FOR EMPLOYMENT AND SKILLS
INVITATION TO TENDER**

Evaluation of the SSC Relicensing Process Survey

PR3 POXX DB

	Date contract was completed:			
	Have you had any contracts terminated for poor performance in the last three years, or any contracts where damages have been claimed by the contracting authority?			Yes / No

UK COMMISSION FOR EMPLOYMENT AND SKILLS INVITATION TO TENDER

Evaluation of the SSC Relicensing Process Survey

PR3 POXX DB

6 DECLARATIONS

Please complete this section and include it within your tender. Unsigned declarations submitted with tender documents will be regarded as a non-compliant application.

I acknowledge that the standard contractual terms and conditions of the UK Commission will form the basis of any contract between the parties resulting from this invitation to tender;

IMPORTANT YOU MUST COMPLETE THIS SECTION FOR YOUR APPLICATION TO BE VALID. THIS IS A LEGALLY BINDING DECLARATION.

I declare on my honour that, (any of) the director(s) / officer(s) / partner(s) / proprietor(s) of the organisation, are not currently in, or previously have been in any of the following situations. Any of the events below would exclude us from participating in this procurement application:

- Declared bankrupt, being wound up or having any affairs administered by the courts. Entered into an arrangement with creditors, or have suspended business activities. Not the subject of proceedings concerning any such matters and not in any similar situation arising from a similar procedure provided for in legislation or regulations;
- Been convicted of any offence concerning professional judgement by a judgement which has the force of res judicata¹,
- Been found guilty of any grave professional misconduct proven by any means which the contracting authority can justify;
- Failed to fulfil obligations relating to payment of social security contributions or the payment of taxes in accordance with the legal provisions of the country where established or with those of the country or the contracting authority or those of the country where the contract is to be performed;
- Been the subject of a judgment which has the force of res judicata for fraud, corruption, involvement in a criminal organisation or any other illegal activity;
- as a consequence of another procurement have not been declared to be in serious breach of contract for failure to comply with contractual obligations,

In addition, the undersigned declares on their honour:

- that on the date of submission of the tender, the company or organisation I represent and the staff proposed for this tender are not subject to conflicts of interests in the context of this invitation to tender; I undertake to inform the UK Commission without delay of any change to this situation after the date of submission of the tender.
- that the information provided to the UK Commission within the context of this invitation to tender is accurate, sincere and complete.
- that the amount or appropriate amount of the tender price has not been communicated to any other party, other than in confidence and for the express purpose of obtaining insurances or a bond in connection with this tender;
- the tender has not been fixed nor adjusted in collusion with any interested party;
- the tender will remain valid for 6 months after the closing date of the tender;

Name	Title
Signature	Date

¹ res judicata – a matter already settled in court; cannot be raised again.