

INVITATION TO TENDER

FOR

FRAMEWORK FOR COMMUNICATION SERVICES

AT ECMWF, SHINFIELD PARK, READING, UK

REF: ECMWF/ITT/2021/319

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1. BACKGROUND

1.1 Definitions

Definitions used in this Invitation to Tender (ITT) are listed here:

“ECMWF”	means European Centre for Medium-Range Weather Forecasts;
“Centre”	means ECMWF;
“ITT”	means this invitation to tender;
“Tender”	means a response to this ITT;
“Tenderer”	means a Tenderer to this ITT;
“You”	the recipient of this ITT, a prospective “Tenderer”.

1.2 Introduction

This ITT has been prepared by the European Centre for Medium-Range Weather Forecasts, (governed by its Convention and associated Protocol on Privileges and Immunities which came into force on 1 November 1975, and was amended on 6 June 2010) ("ECMWF") for the purposes of obtaining proposals from suppliers for provision of communication services. This Invitation to Tender (hereafter ITT) will result in the setting up of a framework contract with a number of suppliers to provide the communication services for ECMWF.

This framework will replace the previous one (ECMWF/ITT/2017/261) which is expiring in end 2021, and will be for three years with the possibility of two extensions, each for one year, to a maximum of 5 years.

ECMWF is an independent intergovernmental organisation supported by 34 States. Information on ECMWF's activities can be found at <https://www.ecmwf.int/en/about>.

ECMWF has headquarters in Reading, UK, offices in Bonn, Germany, and a data centre in Bologna, Italy.

1.3 General

The ultimate purpose of this ITT is to secure the best value for money in the provision of communication services for ECMWF and more specifically:

- The ITT will result in the establishment of a framework arrangement for the provision of communication services described in Section 1.2 and 1.3 of Annex 1 Specification of Requirements (SoR).
- The framework arrangement will select a restricted pool of suppliers for an initial duration of three years, with two possible extensions of one year each.
- The acceptance to the framework will be based on the evaluation criteria and methodology described in Section 6.1.
- The methodology for assignment of work under the framework is described in Section 2 of Annex 1 Specification of Requirements (SoR).

2. STRUCTURE OF THIS ITT

The ITT document is structured in several parts, described below, all of which form the ITT. The ITT:

- contains an introduction to the ECMWF including background, instructions on how to respond and what information is required and a listing of the events and their dates for this ITT,
- provides detailed specifications for the requirements of this ITT in Annex 1- Specification of

Requirements (SoR),

- provides a Template in Annex 2 to be completed as a part of the response to the requirements and a template for Pricing Tables to be completed by the Tenderers in Annex 3,
- provides the Terms and Conditions of Contract in Annex 4.

3. TIMETABLE FOR THE ITT

We envisage the following timetable for this procurement exercise (all times are UK local unless otherwise stated):

ITT publication date	14 October 2021
Final date/time for receipt by ECMWF of clarification questions	1 November, midnight
Date by which clarification questions will be answered	8 November 2021
Closing Date	16 November 2021, 15:00 UK time
Evaluation by ECMWF	November-December 2021
Sign Contract by	Latest by January 2022

The Tenderer's response shall remain valid for a period of not less than **6 months** after the Closing Date.

ECMWF reserves the right to postpone the dates from those published in this document.

4. SUBMISSION OF RESPONSE

Responses to this ITT must be submitted via ECMWF's eProcurement portal no later than the Closing date/time in section 3.

- (a) ECMWF's eProcurement portal

Tenders must be submitted using ECMWF's eProcurement Portal as described below. Hard copy (paper) submissions will not be accepted. Suppliers must register their organisation on the eProcurement Portal to be able to access the ITT documents and to be able to submit a response to any ITTs.

You only need to register once no matter how many ITTs you are interested in.

- (b) Supplier registration on the eProcurement Portal

To take part in any procurement exercise and to be able to express an interest in an opportunity, first you must register on the eProcurement Portal (ProContract) with details of your organisation. Registration is free and the process is managed by the portal provider Due North. The eProcurement Portal can be accessed from one of the following links: <https://procontract.due-north.com> or <https://procurement.ecmwf.int> (the latter redirects to the ProContract registration page).

When the registration is accepted then you will receive an email containing a reminder of your username and the link to access the opportunity portal. Note that once you are registered, you will be able to see all the opportunities available in ProContract for various buyer organisations beside ECMWF. You will be able to narrow your search results to opportunities issued by ECMWF by selecting the corresponding portal or organisation on the ProContract Opportunities page.

Further guidance for suppliers is available at <https://supplierhelp.due-north.com>

Registration does not commit you to respond to any ITTs. ECMWF will not interpret your registration as an intention to respond to an ITT. However, you can “Register intent” to notify ECMWF that you intend to respond to an ITT if you wish to.

Once an ITT is published you must log on to the Portal and express interest in the ITT to obtain access to the ITT documents and any subsequent clarifications.

(c) Online questionnaire

The questionnaire asks for details about your organisation and your Proposal. It must be answered online. You can download it to look at the questions but you cannot complete the questionnaire offline and upload it back to the portal. It does not have to be answered completely in one session. You can start to answer it, then save it and complete it later.

The portal will remember your responses to questions in the questionnaire so that if you respond to more than one ITT and any questions are the same you will not have to respond to those questions again (though you are able to change your answer). Having completed the questionnaire online you can either save it for later submission or submit it straight away. **You must click the “Submit response” button and the status of your response should read “Submitted”**. Until the closing date you can change answers to the questionnaire and submit a new version. ECMWF is able to see only the version of the answers that is current at the closing date.

(d) Clarification questions

All correspondence is conducted via the e-Procurement Portal. No other form of communication will be accepted.

Any questions concerning this ITT (“Clarification Questions”) must be submitted via the eProcurement Portal and must be received by ECMWF more than 15 days before the closing date. ECMWF will respond via the portal within five working days and will send the question and answer to all suppliers who have expressed an interest in the ITT unless the question is specific to a supplier’s proprietary solution. The identity of the questioner will not be revealed.

Please note that ECMWF reserves the right to contact bidders during the evaluation process in order to clarify points in their response, therefore the contact point should be monitored during this period.

4.2 Timeliness of response

ECMWF will not consider any late or partial responses to this ITT (unless this is due to a technical

issue caused by either ECMWF or their e-portal) nor will it consider requests for extension of the time or date fixed for the submission of responses. It may, however, at its own absolute discretion extend the time or date fixed for submission and in such an event ECMWF will notify all Tenderers who have expressed interest.

4.3 Costs of preparation of response

Recipients of this ITT will be responsible for and bear all of their own costs, liabilities and expenses which may be incurred in the preparation of their responses to this ITT.

5. REQUIRED INFORMATION

5.1 Summary

Tenderers should, at the beginning of the proposal, before setting out the answers to the questions, include a brief executive summary of the response to the ITT.

5.2 Contact details

Please supply details of the person at your organisation who can be contacted by ECMWF in relation to your proposal. Please give their name, title, address and location, telephone number and e-mail address.

5.3 Customers and references

Please describe in brief terms your company's history and your recent provision of communication services. Please supply a list of two customers to whom similar services to those requested in this ITT are provided giving details of the revenue from the relevant contract and the types of services being provided. These should be customers where you have been providing services in the last three years.

ECMWF reserves the right to seek references from one or all of these customers.

5.4 Commercial arrangements

Please complete the Pricing Tables provided in Annex 3 in accordance with the following:

- Prices shall be quoted in pounds sterling (£), net of UK taxes and VAT.
- Pricing tables will constitute the agency rate cards (daily rates) for the staff categorised according to role.
- These rates will be a cap on those that you will use to quote for specific work in the future, and they must include any mark-up that you would apply.
- Prices should be fixed minimum for one year and tenderers should state the formula or index that they would use to change the rates over time. Note that the rates are one of the evaluation criteria.
- Please specify the mark-up that you would apply to any goods and services that you would procure from a third party as part of a project.
- Please specify the mark-up that you would apply to any work provided by one of your subcontractors.

5.5 Standards and procedures

Please provide a list of your quality assurance processes and management systems and if applicable, any quality related accreditations or certifications you hold.

5.6 Response to the Specification of Requirements

Please complete Annex 2 Templates for Tenderers in order to respond to the specification of

requirements.

5.7 Terms and Conditions

The terms and conditions for this contract are at Annex 4. As these are for a framework, all selected suppliers will be engaged on the same terms and conditions. The tenderers are required to confirm their acceptance of the Terms and Conditions at Annex 4 by responding to the relevant question of the online questionnaire in the eprocurement portal.

Please note that as a result of ECMWF's immunity from jurisdiction, any contract resulting from this ITT must contain an arbitration clause which is offered by ECMWF to all contracting parties. Further information may be found at <http://www.ecmwf.int/en/about/suppliers> in document "ECMWF's status: Arbitration and VAT".

ECMWF reserves the right to negotiate with one or more Tenderers before taking a decision on the placing of a contract.

The proposal which you submit, clarified if necessary, will be part of the contract.

5.8 Additional matters

Please set out any additional information or other relevant matters which you think have not been adequately addressed in the ITT and/or merit further consideration in your response.

6. OTHER

6.1 Evaluation method and selection criteria

Tenders will be evaluated based on the high level evaluation criteria and weights shown in the table below for acceptance to the framework.

Evaluation criteria	Weighting
Price	40%
Quality	60%

Assessment and scoring of the "Quality" criterion will be based on the responses of the bidders to the requirements described in Annex 1 Specification of Requirements, Section 3.1 Agency profile, Section 3.2 Proven experience, Section 3.3 Quality of resources to be deployed and Section 3.4 Management and implementation. Each response will be scored individually for each Service Area applied for.

For the evaluation of price criterion, Annex 3 Pricing tables proposed by the bidders will be pooled according to the ranges of the rates therein and each pool of prices will be given a score relative to other bids i.e. higher priced bids will score less than lower priced bids. This process will take place for each Service area.

This evaluation will select a number of agencies for service areas (see Section 1.2 and 1.3 of Annex 1 Specification of Requirements) with whom ECMWF will enter into contracts as part of the framework. The number of agencies to be accepted to the service areas will depend on the quality and suitability of responses, capacities of the agencies and ECMWF needs in those service areas. Successful tenderers may be included in one or more service areas. Acceptance into one service area does not necessarily imply acceptance to any other.

The methodology for future assignment of work under the framework is described in Section 2 of Annex 1 Specification of Requirements (SOR).

Following notification of the result of your tender you may request feedback on the evaluation from ECMWF.

6.2 Confidentiality

Except where ECMWF has made its documents publicly available, the contents of this ITT together with all other information, materials, specifications or other documents provided by ECMWF, or prepared by Tenderers specifically for ECMWF, shall be treated at all times as confidential by the recipients. You shall not disclose any such information, materials, specifications or other documents to any third parties or to any other part of your group or use them for any purpose other than for the preparation and submission of a response to this ITT nor shall You publicise ECMWF's name or the project without the prior written consent of ECMWF. ECMWF in turn confirms that it shall treat all information provided to it by the Tenderer as confidential and further confirms that such information will not be disclosed by ECMWF to any third parties, other than its advisers and consultants.

You shall ensure that all third parties to whom disclosure is made shall keep any such information, materials, specifications or other documents confidential and not disclose them to any other third party except as set out above.

6.3 The Tenderer shall not:

- a. Consult, communicate or agree with any other Tenderer on any matter whatsoever related to the ITT;
- b. Disclose its proposed price for the ITT, whether directly or indirectly, to any other Tenderer, but this shall not preclude the Tenderer from publishing its standard list prices;
- c. Make any attempt to induce any other person or organisation to submit or not to submit a Tender.

Please confirm that you have complied with the above conditions.

6.4 Warnings/disclaimers

Nothing contained in this ITT or any other communication made between the supplier and ECMWF or its representatives shall constitute an agreement, contract or representation between ECMWF and any other party (except for a formal award of contract made in writing by ECMWF). Receipt by a supplier of this ITT does not imply the existence of a contract or commitment by or with ECMWF for any purpose.

ECMWF reserves the right to change any aspect of, or cease, the ITT at any time.

While ECMWF has taken all reasonable steps to ensure, as at the date of this document, that the facts which are contained in this ITT are true and accurate in all material respects, ECMWF does not make any representation or warranty as to the accuracy or completeness or otherwise of this ITT, or the reasonableness of any assumptions on which this document may be based. ECMWF accepts no liability to Tenderers whatsoever and however arising and whether resulting from the use of this ITT, or any omissions from or deficiencies in this document.

ECMWF may use the information included in a response for any reasonable purpose connected with this ITT.

ANNEX 1 - SPECIFICATION OF REQUIREMENTS (SOR)

Please see separate document for Annex 1

ANNEX 2 - TEMPLATE FOR TENDERERS TO COMPLETE

Please see separate document for Annex 2

ANNEX 3 - PRICING TABLES

Please see separate document for Annex 3

ANNEX 4– TERMS AND CONDITIONS

Please see separate document for Annex 4