

TECHNOLOGY PARTNERSHIP - QUESTIONS AND RESPONSES

No	Question	Response
1	Is there a minimum annual turnover a company must have in order to bid for the above contract?	<p>In line with the Public Contracts Regulations (PCR2015) the minimum yearly turnover companies are required to have shall not exceed twice the estimated contract value exclusive of VAT. The estimated contract value exclusive of VAT is £5.25 million and companies must have an annual turnover of a minimum of £10.5 million in order to bid.</p> <p>The relevant provision in PCR2015 is 58. (9) and can be found at this link http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2015/102/regulation/58/made</p> <p><i>This response was amended on 29 October. The required minimum annual turnover was originally stated to be £12m. The correct figure is £10.5m as now stated.</i></p>
2	I couldn't seem to find detail in the guidance documentation of when the development was expected to be complete?	<p>The development milestones can be found on pages 9 and 12 of the specification document, which can be found at https://www.hdruk.ac.uk/gateway-development-phase-2/, with a final completion date of 30 April 2022.</p>
3	Are you able to provide any budget guidance for the development?	<p>The maximum total budget for this procurement excluding the rapid development task (i.e. design, development and operation of the Gateway to April 2022, Milestones 2-5) is £6.3 million inclusive of VAT.</p>
4	We understand minimal viable services are being developed by a current supplier. Is it possible to contact this company to explore consortium bids?	<p>HDR UK expects to announce the names of the Gateway Phase 1 delivery partners in the next couple of days. You may contact any company to explore consortium bids.</p>
5	<p>Regarding this section of the tender:</p> <p>'Following interviews, a shortlist of no more than 3 applicants will be invited to take part in a rapid development exercise. This will take place over 8 weeks and will involve the shortlisted applicants working independently to build and test a specified functional component of the Gateway. The HDR UK team will work alongside each applicant over this period and the work will be remunerated according to the contract for this task. Following completion of this task, HDR UK will select a partner based on the completed component and the experience over the rapid development period.'</p> <p>Would this be a process the potential applicants would have to attend without payment?</p>	<p>Applicants will be remunerated for taking part in the rapid development exercise in accordance with a contract to be agreed with the shortlisted applicants. The contract for the rapid development exercise will be provided on 22 November to suppliers who are invited to submit a proposal.</p>
6	<p>In section 3.6 Value for Money you state 'The maximum total budget for this procurement excluding the rapid development task (i.e. design, development and operation of the Gateway to April 2022, Milestones 2-5) is £6.3 million.'</p> <p>Please can you confirm if the £6.3 million is exclusive or inclusive of VAT.</p>	<p>The figure of £6.3 million is inclusive of VAT. The net figure is £5.25 million.</p>
7	<p>In your FAQs document, the response to the first question is: In line with the Public Contracts Regulations (PCR2015) the minimum yearly turnover companies are required to have shall not exceed twice the estimated contract value. The estimated contract value is £6.3 million and companies must have an annual turnover of a minimum of £12 million in order to bid.</p> <p>We would like to check: The contract value is £6.3m over 2 years i.e. £3.15m per annum.</p> <p>Can you confirm that when reviewing turnover to contract value, we should consider the threshold is twice the lifetime value of the contract or twice the annual value of the contract?</p>	<p>We can confirm that the threshold is twice the lifetime value of the contract. The contract value is £5.25 million excluding VAT and companies must have an annual turnover of £10.5 million in order to bid.</p> <p>In line with Regulation 6. (1) of PCR 2015, the calculation of the estimated value of a procurement shall be based on the total amount payable, net of VAT, as estimated by the contracting authority, including any form of option and any renewals of the contracts as explicitly set out in the procurement documents.</p>
8	Is there anything that the MVP partners know that may give them a strategic advantage in this call?	<p>No. The MVP is being developed to ensure that the learnings and outputs can be reused and that the MVP process does not confer an advantage on the partners involved.</p>

9	Are there any areas of the Service not currently being fulfilled through your current incumbent supply chain that you would like to see addressed through this procurement.	The current service is a limited scope MVP. The procurement is to address the development, delivery and operation of a production Gateway to address the functionality described in the specification.
10	Does the engagement allow for offshore, or hybrid offshore/onsite development resources?	We would consider a hybrid approach however this is an Agile project and will require regular face to face interaction with HDR UK and our broad stakeholder community in the UK.
11	Should we expect any additional information describing product functionality in more details during the RFP stage? Otherwise - is it safe to assume that we should prepare a detailed project plan / roadmap based on the existing information?	This is an Agile project where requirements will evolve during the course of the project and therefore we will not be providing any additional information during the RFP stage. Your assumption is valid.
12	Seems like security of handling requests will be key - interested in how that will be specified/measured	HDR UK is not taking responsibility for the handling of data access requests. This will remain with the data custodians. The Innovation Gateway is intended to provide an enhanced front end to these processes.
13	What Framework is this contract under?	The contract is not being let under any existing Framework. The requirement has been posted to OJEU (the Official Journal of the European Union) using the Innovation Partnership process and therefore is open to any supplier that is interested in submitting a bid.
14	Who needs to submit Questionnaire Parts 1 and 2 that each member of the consortium will complete - the individual organisations themselves, or the lead organisation ?	Our preference would be for the lead organisation to co-ordinate the response and therefore should submit Parts 1 and 2 for supporting organisations. However, if the supporting organisation did submit directly this would be picked up as long as they provide an answer to 1.2 (a) - (ii) Name of group of economic operators.
15	What are the Open Source components that are in the existing software architecture?	The MVP architecture is under development and all outputs will be open source and so available to the successful supplier.
16	The Tech Spec states the Gateway should be developed with all components developed in the open, using open source principles incorporating best practice in security, reliability, availability and scalability such that it can meet the business critical requirements. Whilst all platform services should ensure they utilise Open Standards wherever possible to support their integration and the ability to easily swap services / components in and out with minimal rework we think there are some licensed software products that would provide a good basis for the strategic roadmap which whilst having a license cost associated with them would be portable across different cloud providers. Can you clarify if these products could be submitted as non-strategic technology choices for validation by the formal governance process ?	Our principle is that open source should be used wherever possible and that all development funded by HDR UK will be made available as open source. If you consider that a licenced software package would be best of breed for a functional component this could be discussed during development however it would not be our preference and we would seek assurance to avoid platform lock-in.
17	Is Security Clearance required for the people who will deliver the project? And if yes, at what level please ?	No. Security clearance is not required.
18	Does the Provision of the Cloud service form part of this bid or it is contracted separately ?	Yes, this is an operational as well as development contract.
19	To clarify any assumption that could be made relating to patients feedback requirement can you please advise:- - what will the patients feedback be used for? - how will it be used ? - where will it be used ? - is there any expectation on what platform this feedback will be presented on? - will patients have access to the portal to access information held on themselves by the Trustees? - are patients to leave feedback on the portal ? - Freedom of Information Act	The Gateway provides services to support the research and innovation community. It will not provide direct access to the data and patient feedback on data will be through the data custodians. However, we expect patient involvement and engagement in the development process of the Gateway.
20	It is assumed the patient feedback will be used by the Data Custodians to improve the quality of data held in the Hub - is this a correction assumption ?	The Gateway provides services to support the research and innovation community. It will not provide direct access to the data and patient feedback on data will be through the data custodians.
21	Is the assumption correct that the data hubs are hosted within the Trusted Research Environments?	Yes. HDR UK's opinion is that all analysis should be conducted within Trusted Research Environments.
22	Is training only required for HDR UK team and the Data Custodians?	Yes, training is only required for HDR UK team and the Data Custodians.

23	<p>It is assumed the capabilities outlined within the Spec Doc (Pages 12 and 13) for delivering each milestone is the basic functions needed for training the HDR UK team and Data Custodians. Is this assumption correct? If so:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Are there capabilities listed on the doc that will not be required for training? i.e Process - Are there capabilities/functions not listed on the doc that may be required for training? 	<p>This is an Agile project and the requirements for training will evolve during the project.</p>
24	<p>Are there preferences on what the training materials should be? E.g. Should it be in the form of a video or slideshow?</p>	<p>Details will be defined later with the successful supplier.</p>
25	<p>Are training materials to be grouped by milestones? or at a even lower level i.e. features such as Dashboard, Access Request Management?</p>	<p>Details will be defined later with the successful supplier.</p>
26	<p>Is the purpose of the training material to demonstrate how to manage the Gateway from an administrator perspective? Or how to use the Gateway from an end user perspective?</p>	<p>End users should be supported through the Gateway by intuitive design with appropriate context based help.</p>
27	<p>Appendix 1 states 2 different completion dates for the Rapid Deployment Development task - 20th March 2020 (pg 12) and 27th March 2020 in the capabilities table (pg 13). Which is the correct date ?</p>	<p>20th March - Date for completion of the Rapid development task. 27th March - Date for the selection of the Technology Partner.</p>
28	<p>Could you explain the relationship between the infrastructure and the DIHs?</p>	<p>The Health Data Research Hubs will be members of the UK Health Data Alliance and as such will be making their data available for discovery through the Gateway</p>
29	<p>Clarity on the IP requirements and the process to manage background IP.</p>	<p>Our principle is that open source should be used wherever possible and that all development funded by HDR UK will be made available as open source. If you consider that a licenced software package would be best of breed for a functional component this could be discussed during development however it would not be our preference and we would seek assurance to avoid platform lock-in. It is expected that any background IP that is required for newly developed capability to be licenced under a free, non-exclusive perpetual licence.</p>
30	<p>Is it expected that any 3rd party tooling/licencing costs for the 2 years will be included in the response?</p>	<p>Yes. Any response that requires 3rd party tooling/licencing should include the costs within the pricing model for your proposal.</p>
31	<p>Will the outputs of the MVP adhere to the earlier stated principles, specifically will they be open and available to all interested parties + bidders?</p>	<p>It is a fundamental principle of HDR UK that our funded development will be made available as open source. All MVP outputs will be available to the successful partner and also to the wider community. We want to develop a community that will develop a rich set of tools over the coming years.</p>
32	<p>The proposals should be centred around public and patients. Should the supplier have access to the groups already in place or can HDR UK provide access to suitable groups for user research?</p>	<p>We will be providing the successful supplier with access to the user community . We have a Health Data Research Public Advisory Board that will be actively involved in this process including the supplier selection process. The successful supplier will be working with the Public Advisory Board as well as with our broad user community. We have run design workshops in the work preceding the MVPs so we have very engaged users who will provide high quality input.</p>
33	<p>I can imagine that a potential consortium might include, for example, existing HDR UK academic members. Is this OK, or excluded due to potential conflict of interest?</p>	<p>It is not excluded due to potential conflict of interests. We expect that some of the proposals will include academics that have a relationship with HDR UK.</p>
34	<p>Are you looking for bids that cover all three aspects or are you accepting bids that only cover part of the wider ecosystem?</p>	<p>We are looking for a bid that covers all aspects of the procurement. We do have an expectation that some bids may not be from a single supplier, and that we may see bids come from consortia that cover different aspects of the procurement coming together under a legal organisation. So there is an approach that if you have strengths in one particular aspect, that you can collaborate with others, but we expect the proposals to address the whole of the procurement.</p>

35	What are the goals and success metric from MVP - Phase 1?	<p>The goal of the MVP is to be able to bring together the metadata from key datasets, and to provide an exemplary discovery experience i.e. search and browse experience over that metadata. We have clearly set out to the suppliers what we are looking for from that experience. The key is getting a really exemplary user experience, building on the knowledge that came from the NIHR funded Health Data Finder.</p> <p>The specification documents for Phase 1 are available on our website at https://www.hdr.uk/gateway-development/</p>
36	Is this project entirely technology agnostic or is there a preference for any specific tech for reasons of supportability, efficiency etc?	At this point the procurement is technology agnostic. As we go through the co-development of the Innovation Gateway we will work with the supplier to ensure that we have technology that meets the guiding principles around security, availability, supportability etc. That will form part of the design and development phase and it is likely those technologies will change which is one of the reasons we need this to be Agile, to be modular, and make best use of API technologies as it is going to evolve over the next 2- 5 years.
37	Can a sub-contractor be on more than one bid?	There is no reason why a sub-contractor cannot partake in more than one bid.
38	Please can you confirm when and where the slides from this webinar will be available?	The slides will be made available on our Phase 2 webpage of our website later this afternoon. The recording will also go on to the same page.
39	Envisaged ROM demographics for the gateway architecture: a. Range /number of concurrent users b. Number of separate upstream data sources / linkages (federated data end points) c. Technology range / variety of Trusted Research Environments d. Volumes of data and data types anticipated (day 1 year 3)	<p>It is difficult to be precise about the level of usage to be expected once the Innovation Gateway is in production usage so these are order of magnitude estimates;</p> <p>a. High number of registered users (1000s) but low concurrent use (10s) as this isn't an analysis platform.</p> <p>b. 1000s of datasets with 10s of linkages to other federated sources, metadata catalogues.</p> <p>c. 5-10 TREs. Some specialised (e.g. imaging with high GPU capability) some more general.</p> <p>d. Unknown. Data will not flow through the Innovation Gateway so this should not affect design.</p>
40	What are the data services /products that will be provided through the Gateway: a. What, to whom, anticipated usage / demographics	Services to be provided are shown in the specification. Data products and services will be provided by users of the Innovation Gateway such as the Health Data Research Hubs.
41	High level architecture definition /diagram – is there anything that can be circulated (functional & technical)	The architecture will be co-developed with the successful supplier. As an agile, design-led project the first phase of development will include detailed user requirements analysis and this will help determine the most appropriate architect.
42	May /buy components: a. Will a solution comprising components of commercial software be accepted as an enabler to de-risk and reduce delivery lead times for the design & build b. If the above is an acceptable approach, will providing such software on a perpetual license basis be ok? c. How would HDR UK align the use of such components with the open source policy as envisaged by HDR UK	Our principle is that open source should be used wherever possible and that all development funded by HDR UK will be made available as open source. If you consider that a licenced software package would be best of breed for a functional component this could be discussed during development however it would not be our preference and we would seek assurance to avoid platform lock-in.
43	Does the software development have to happen onsite or can it be offsite? If so, can it be done 'nearshore'	We would consider a hybrid approach of onshore and offshore however this is an Agile project and will require regular face to face interaction with HDR UK and our broad stakeholder community in the UK. Onshore resources are not expected to be co-located with HDR UK.
44	Do the references have to be with UK-based companies? (we have very strong and relevant non-UK references)	The references do not have to be with UK based companies. The relevance to our requirement is important.
45	Please can you confirm the technology solutions and frameworks you are using in the MVP underway as part of Phase 1 of the programme?	Details of the solutions being used for the MVP are provided at https://www.hdr.uk/gateway-development/ An announcement of the other partners for Phase 1 will be released week commencing 11/11/19.

46	What metadata and data sets are you targeting first in the MVP and early roadmap for the Gateway?	We will shortly be making available a metadata specification that will describe the dataset and variable level metadata for the first stage of onboarding. We are working with the hubs and Alliance members to prioritise datasets for onboarding and this will be addressed as a separate agile project. These datasets will reflect a refresh of the HDF datasets, initial datasets from the Health Data Research Hubs and from the UK Health Data Research Alliance.
47	Do you require solution and cloud service platform suppliers to be included in the RFI response for 15th November or can these be added as the procurement progresses?	Details of solution partners that have already been identified should be included within the Standard Selection Questionnaire response.
48	Portal function - Discover: is this functionality based on the metadata that is onboarded onto the Gateway Portal only? That is, for the Discover function the Gateway Portal would not query actual data held by Alliance or Hub members.	As this is an agile project using a design thinking methodology these will be refined during the design and user analysis.
49	Portal function - Discover: is this functionality based on the metadata that is onboarded onto the Gateway Portal only? That is, for the Discover function the Gateway Portal would not query actual data held by Alliance or Hub members.	As outlined in the specification initial search experience will be through metadata only, however this will be enhanced through semantic search and cohort identification that will require search over remotely held data. This will require remote search and not be based on importing of data into the Gateway.
50	TRE Integration: Are the owners/operators of the TREs responsible for standing up CI/CD pipelines for provisioning and deployment of containerised workloads into those environments and expose the pipelines so that the pipelines can be accessed via the Gateway Portal and used by data custodians to provision the workloads required by end users?	There will be a joint responsibility to develop an approach to deploy containerised workload into TREs. The specification includes functionality for a tools repository that will need to be integrated with TREs.
51	Operations: Milestone 5 specifies "Full 365 * 24 *7 production operations to support international usage". What is the expectation in terms of operations support prior to Milestone 5 - reasonable endeavour and UK business hours?	The initial SLA details will apply for part of the contract. The details in the specification are indicative of the initial SLA. The development will need to support the potential requirement to move to a more rigorous SLA but the operational aspects of this would be negotiated separately. The specification includes this as suppliers will need to have the infrastructure to support a 24*7 support and operations infrastructure.
52	Monitoring: what are the system monitoring requirements?	As this is an agile project using a design thinking methodology these will be refined during the design and user analysis.
53	DevOps: what are the DevOps requirements?	As this is an agile project using a design thinking methodology these will be refined during the design and user analysis.
54	Containerisation: what is the requirement of containerisation? The Technology Partnership Specification mentioned in passing containers and containerised workloads but does not make it clear the extent of containerisation or whether orchestrated containerisation required. For example, would the use of Kubernetes or Openshift as a container platform be required, encouraged or desired?	As this is an agile project using a design thinking methodology these will be refined during the design and user analysis.
55	Geographic cover: the Technology Partnership Specification states that "The Gateway will be designed to operate at a national and international scale". Which geographic locations are required to access the Gateway and what are the expected performance?	The initial focus will be on the UK. However it is expected that academic researchers and industry from outside the UK will be active users. The datasets will however be exclusively from UK data custodians. Performance requirements will be refined during the design and user analysis.
56	Data centre locations: are there any restrictions where the data centres should be (in cloud)?	We have not currently placed any restrictions on the hosting the application. The Gateway will not be holding health data, only metadata.
57	Disaster Recovery: what is the expectation of the HDR UK, if any, in terms of DR patterns?	The indicative requirements for recovery are outlined in the specification. Suppliers will be expected to configure to meet these requirements. This will be a public cloud only deployment.
58	Aside from cohort Identification can you please outline the other search criteria expected for the end users?	The high level search and browse requirement are described in the specification, these will be refined during the design and user analysis.
59	In the scenario that end-user is not happy with the data results, how is this process handled?	The Gateway will provide user feedback support. In addition it is expect that all search operations will be logged to allow for continued improvement.

60	Gateway support operations - can this be run by teams working outside the UK ?	Yes.
61	<p>On the functional Spec It mentions “Gap analysis will be conducted to identify searches that do not yield results to support prioritisation of dataset onboarding and improvement to search functionality” But how will this process look like? I.e.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - User views and searches for data set - Data set is returned but does not contain all the information required by user - User submits form request expressing their dissatisfaction - Form completion triggers the Gap analysis mentioned on the functional spec 	As this is an agile project using a design thinking methodology these will be refined during the design and user analysis.
62	TRE Integration: are the analytical workspaces to be provided in the Gateway or TREs but accessible in the Gateway through integration with TREs?	All analysis will take place in TREs. The Gateway will not provide workspace for analysis.
63	Please can you describe how you envisage the flow of the data from Data Alliance partners and TREs to the gateway and what is your expectation of the Technology partner to manage that end to end integration.	Data will not flow through the Gateway. The Gateway acts to provide discovery, access request management, tools repositories and integration with TREs. There is no data flow through the Gateway.
64	As part of the data flow, please can HDR provide details of your expectation of the deidentification and linkage integration between the alliance partners and the TREs.	Data will not flow through the Gateway. The Gateway acts to provide discovery, access request management, tools repositories and integration with TREs. There is no data flow through the Gateway.
65	Please could you provide details of the expected remuneration for the Rapid Development Task	This will be provided to successfully shortlisted suppliers once shortlisting has been completed. An indicative figure is £80,000 for the period
66	Please provide details of any anticipated storage or compute expected to be required in the gateway, for example related to any repositories required for repositories for artefacts such as shareable analytics, libraries and/or shared/collaboration areas.	The Gateway will not provide for an analytics environment and therefore the storage and compute will reflect the requirements to support the storage of metadata, tools artefacts, etc and the compute requirements for primary search and discovery.
67	Please could you provide details of the expected resources required in terms of skillsets and numbers for the Rapid Development Task to understand what is required so that we can provide the appropriate resources to support this.	This will be provided to successfully shortlisted suppliers once shortlisting has been completed. It is expected that the Rapid Development Task will require a team of less than five people, requiring skills in development, architecture and project management.
68	Please confirm that operational / BAU support can be operated from offshore.	Yes.