# Freelance Copywriting Support 2022-2027

# Invitation to Tender (ITT)

## Issued 15.08.2022

Introduction

Health Data Research UK (HDR UK) is the national Institute for health data science. We require support with producing written content that communicates our mission, demonstrates our impact, and is accessible and inclusive to a lay audience.

Through this ITT, we plan to appoint a panel of freelance copywriters to support HDR UK with this important work. The panel will commence in Autumn 2022 and potentially be in place throughout our next quinquennial funding period 2023-2028.

About HDR UK

HDR UK is the national institute for health data that includes England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland. Its mission is to unite the UK’s health data to enable discoveries that improve people’s lives. By working in partnership with the NHS, industry, academia and patients, and providing safe and secure access to rich health data, it aims to better understand diseases and discover new ways to prevent, treat and cure them.

Health Data Research UK is a charity funded by UK Research and Innovation, the Medical Research Council, the British Heart Foundation, the National Institute for Health Research, the Economic and Social Research Council, the Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council, Health and Care Research Wales, Health and Social Care Research and Development Division (Public Health Agency, Northern Ireland), Chief Scientist Office of the Scottish Government Health and Social Care Directorates, and Wellcome.

For more information, see the overview of our [2023-2028 Strategy.](https://www.hdruk.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/220204_Section-1-Overview-of-HDR-UK_FINAL_PUBLISHED.pdf)

How we work

HDR UK is a federated virtual institute. We have a small central team located in London and partners with research organisations, the NHS and industry across 32 locations in the UK.

HDR UK’s work spans three core areas:

* **Uniting health data:** Providing the UK-wide and global co-ordination and leadership of health data infrastructure and services required to make health-relevant data FAIR (findable, accessible, interoperable, reusable)
* **Advancing research discoveries:** Supporting high impact UK-wide research programmes that address major health and societal challenges, guide the development of the infrastructure and services for the benefit of other researchers, and are outward-looking with global reach.
* **Promoting partnerships:** Assembling an ambitious health data research ecosystem with enduring benefits for all researchers, drawing on skills, resources, and expertise from academic, NHS, industry and government partners.

HDR UK’s values

HDR UK’s values guide how we work together within HDR UK and with our partners and other stakeholders:

1. **Transparency**: we will share information, insights and innovations so that we learn faster together.
2. **Optimism**: we believe that we can make things better, that we can do things differently and that we can overcome challenges to create a new and thriving health data ecosystem that benefits patients and the public, the NHS, scientific discovery and industry.
3. **Respect**: we deliver better results when we work in a truly interdisciplinary way. We listen, share and respect a diversity of thought and opinion, perspective and experience. We are inclusive - leveraging and fairly attributing the expertise and capabilities of others.
4. **Courage**: we are leading the way and will be prepared to try new things, take risks, embrace ambiguity and challenge the status quo. We will contribute opinions to shape the future of health data research.
5. **Humility**: we have a lot to learn from others; and aim to be free from pride and arrogance.

Background

**Overview of the communications team**

HDR UK has a small communications team of three, who report to the Director of Insights, Communications and Engagement.

Within the team, our Science Communications Manager oversees communications about the research HDR UK supports – including lay summaries of research papers, research press releases and news stories, write-ups of science events, and impact reports.

Our Comms and Content officer leads on optimising content for digital channels and produces content across the breadth of the institute’s work – including news stories on new partnerships/training programmes/funding announcements, blogs, and interview pieces.

Our Head of Communications oversees both functions and leads on corporate communications for HDR UK – including the Annual Report, strategy documents, major announcements, and reputation management.

**Why freelance writing support is required**

Given the relatively small size of our Communications team, we require external support with producing written content to manage the team’s capacity and support them when under strain.

Some pieces of work will be consistently assigned to freelance writers, including our monthly batch of 3-6 research lay summaries.

Other pieces of work will be assigned on a more ad-hoc basis, including longer pieces of content like event write-ups, and reactive content like news stories that the team don’t have capacity to lead on.

**How freelance support dovetails into the communications team**

Suppliers would be briefed by the relevant member of the Communications team on any given job, and would be expected to work directly with that individual to complete the piece of work.

This point of contact from HDR UK would also manage invoicing and payment for the given job.

Our Requirements

HDR UK is seeking freelance writers to work with us to support the delivery of written communications that support our communications strategy. **HDR UK anticipates selecting 3-4 freelance writers through this procurement process who will be invited to enter into a non-exclusive ‘Master Services Agreement’ with HDR UK.**

As and when support is required, HDR UK will issue a brief to the panellists and a quote for each project will be required. The panellist chosen based on the best quote for any specific project will be awarded that piece of work to be ‘called-off’ under the pre-agreed terms of the ‘Master Services Agreement’.

Establishing this panel will make the process of appointing a panellist efficient over the period planned, mitigating the need for more frequent formal procurement each time.

HDR UK has previously spent circa £10k per annum on freelance writing services and it is expected that this will continue and potentially increase over the next quinquennium period. Budgets will be provided for individual projects and we would expect to pay either based on a day rate or total project for larger pieces of work, to be determined by the project lead.

Scope of Work

The work will include (but does not guarantee and is not limited to): 3-6 [research case studies](https://www.hdruk.ac.uk/research/case-studies/) per month as selected by HDR UK’s Impact Committee, [lay summaries of research papers](https://www.hdruk.ac.uk/case-studies/patient-centric-characterization-of-multimorbidity-trajectories-in-patients-with-severe-mental-illnesses-a-temporal-bipartite-network-modeling-approach/), [news stories](https://www.hdruk.ac.uk/news/new-research-reveals-fundamental-change-in-the-omicron-variant/) and [press releases](https://www.hdruk.ac.uk/news/uk-health-data-research-alliance-welcomes-new-member/), [event write ups](https://www.hdruk.ac.uk/news/bhf-data-science-centre-research-showcase-report/), [reports](https://www.hdruk.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/Improving-UK-Health-Data-Impacts-from-Health-Data-Research-Hubs-v2.pdf), [annual reviews](https://www.hdruk.ac.uk/about-us/our-strategy/annual-reports/) and other written content as required.

Non-written content (videos, infographic, design work etc) is out of scope of this procurement.

Location

HDR UK is headquartered in London at the Gibbs Building, 215 Euston Road, London, NW1 2BE. However, it is anticipated that services will be delivered remotely unless expressly requested as part of a specific project under this proposed agreement.

For example, a piece of work involving an event write-up/report may require the supplier to attend the event in person.

Procurement Timetable

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| **Stage of process** | **Date** |
| Date ITT Issued | Monday 15th August 2022 |
| Deadline for clarification questions | Friday 26th August 2022 |
| Deadline for response | Friday 2nd September 2022 |
| Notification of invitation to pitch | w/c 5th September 2022 |
| Day of pitch | w/c 5th September 2022 |
| Notification of intent to award | Friday 9th September 2022 |
| Contract start date | September 2022 |
| Contract end date | March 31st 2028 |

Tender Response Format

Please submit your response to [procurement@hdruk.ac.uk](mailto:procurement@hdruk.ac.uk) by **17:00 BST on Friday 2nd September 2022**.

If you have any questions before submitting your response, please send to [procurement@hdruk.ac.uk](mailto:procurement@hdruk.ac.uku) no later than **17:00 BST on Friday 26th August** – the deadline for clarification questions.

**A complete response will comprise:**

* **A complete Response Template (Appendix 1 below)**
* **Where requested, separate attachments, clearly labelled with supplier name and the specific requirement reference**
* **Submission in a single compressed, .zip file clearly labelled with the supplier’s name**.

Selection Criteria

Suppliers will be selected based upon the following criteria. Suppliers should be able to demonstrate:

* A good understanding of HDR UK’s work, and be able to communicate this in a concise and clear way that is accessible to the public.
* Experience of, and ability to, produce content similar to that listed under ‘scope of the work’ for HDR UK or another relevant organisation in the health and research sector. This includes the ability to take highly scientific and/or technical material and producing high quality, accurate and engaging content for different and lay audiences – including researchers, academics, technologists, and the public.
* A track record of working with scientists to understand the basis for their work, delivering interviews, writing copy and ensuring sign off/approvals.
* The ability to deliver work on time and to brief, even if requested at short notice.

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| **HDR UK ITT Freelance Copywriting Support Selection Criteria Weightings** | |
| **Requirement** | **Weighting** |
| 1.1 Supplier Details | PASS/REJECTED |
| 2.1 Applicant’s understanding of HDR UK’s work and its’ strategy | 10% |
| 2.2 Experience of producing ‘Scope of Work’ content | 30% |
| 2.3 Applicant’s track record working with scientists | 20% |
| 2.4 Process for delivery to time and to brief | 10% |
| 3.1 Transparency of pricing and value for money (VFM) | 30% |
|  | **100%** |

Requirement Scoring Criteria

The scoring mechanism for each requirement is provided under each requirement.

Contracting

HDR UK will need to move forward with contracting swiftly following selection of a supplier in order to commence the services promptly. This engagement will be based upon HDR UK’s standard services contract terms and conditions, amended to suit a ‘Master Services Agreement’ mechanism. Suppliers may request a copy of this agreement as part of the tender process.

Appendix 1: Application Response Template

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| **1.1 Supplier Details** | |
| Name of Company/freelancer: |  |
| Address: |  |
| Company Registration Number: |  |
| Company VAT Number (if applicable): |  |
| Primary Contact Name: |  |
| Primary Contact Email Address: |  |
| Secondary Contact Name: |  |
| Secondary Contact Email Address: |  |
| **Scoring Criteria:**  REJECTED if incomplete | |

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| **2.1 Please describe your understanding of HDR UK’s work and its’ strategy. This should be concise and clear, in a way that is accessible to the public.** | |
| 2.1 | [max 250 words] |
| **Scoring Criteria:**  0 – Response incomplete or does not substantively address the requirement  3 – Response poor and whilst addresses the requirement, causes major concern about the expertise or understanding the applicant has of HDR UK.  7 – Response is good, addressing the requirement and causing only minor concerns about the expertise or understanding the applicant has of HDR UK.  10 – Excellent response proving the expertise and understanding the applicant has of HDR UK. | |

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| **2.2 Please describe your experience of, and ability to, produce the content listed under ‘Scope of Work’.**  **In addition, please include as separate attachments 5 examples of previous work covering a range similar to the ‘Scope of Work’.**  *Note: This includes the ability to take highly scientific and/or technical material and producing high quality, accurate and engaging content for different and lay audiences – including researchers, academics, technologists, and the public.*  *Note: Separate attachments should be clearly labelled ‘supplier name 2.2 attachment 1’ etc* | |
| 2.2 | [max 500 words] |
| **Scoring Criteria:**  0 – Response incomplete or does not substantively address the requirement  3 – Response poor and whilst addresses the requirement, causes major concern about the ability of the applicant to evidence experience covering the breadth required.  7 – Response is good, addressing the requirement and causing only minor concerns about the ability of the applicant to evidence experience covering the breadth required.  10 – Excellent response proving the experience of the applicant and evidencing experience across the breadth required. | |

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| **2.3. Please explain your track record of working with scientists to understand the basis for their work, delivering interviews, writing copy and ensuring sign off/approvals.** | |
| 2.3 | [max 250 words] |
| **Scoring Criteria:**  0 – Response incomplete or does not substantively address the requirement  3 – Response poor and whilst addresses the requirement, causes major concern about the track record of the applicant in this context.  7 – Response is good, addressing the requirement and causing only minor concerns about the track record of the applicant in this context.  10 – Excellent response proving the track record of the applicant in this context. | |

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| **2.4. Please describe the process you will undertake when:**  **i) responding promptly to HDR UK specific project briefs with costed proposals**  **ii) ensuring delivery of work on time and to brief**  **iii) coping with short notice projects or deadlines** | |
| 2.4 | i)  [max 200 words] |
|  | ii)  [max 200 words] |
|  | iii)  [max 200 words] |
| **Scoring Criteria:**  0 – Response incomplete or does not substantively address the requirement  3 – Response poor and whilst addresses the requirements, causes major concern about the applicant’s processes.  7 – Response is good across all three components and causes only minor concerns about the applicant’s processes.  10 – Excellent response giving full confidence in the applicant’s processes across the three components. | |

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| **3.1 Transparency of pricing and value for money (VFM)**  **Please provide a fully transparent description of your proposed charges and charging structure relevant to the ‘Scope of Work’ listed. Please include your day rate, or project management and administration costs as well as clearly stating any appropriate discounts for public sector clients.** | |
| 3.1 | [max 500 words] |
| **Scoring Criteria:**  0 – Response incomplete or does not substantively address the requirement  3 – Response poor and whilst addresses the requirement the breakdown of charges and charging structure is vague or lacking detail and requires significant clarification.  7 – Response is good and the breakdown of charges and charging structure is reasonably detailed and transparent, or requiring little clarification.  10 – Excellent response which provides a detailed charges and charging structure breakdown such that it is clear how future projects will be priced, including how charitable/public sector discounts would be applied and how VFM can be assured. | | |