BTA2235 – Product Audit, Development Tools and Skills Support

Clarification Questions & Answers v0.1

#	Question	Answer
1.	**Existing data and scale of the audit** Can you provide an indication of the volume and coverage of the existing audit material and LVEP product listings that will be made available to the successful supplier? It would also be helpful to understand the approximate number of records/products you expect the completed national inventory to contain.	The BTA is not able to provide a definitive figure at this stage. Data expected to be made available to the successful supplier includes product data drawn from the BTA's internal product listings, which currently covers circa 800+ products, together with member listings that will be requested from LVEPs, and the BTA's Mosaic dataset. The volume and coverage of the LVEP listings and of the Mosaic dataset are not yet known. The BTA is therefore unable to confirm an approximate number of records or products at this stage, or the expected size of the completed national inventory. Establishing the true scale and coverage of the available material forms part of the audit itself. Bidders should set out in their tender response how their proposed approach, methodology and pricing would accommodate a range of data volumes and should state any assumptions made about scale.
2.	**Data schema** Is it possible to provide either the proposed data schema, or an indicative/example version of it, during the tender period?	The BTA is not in a position to release the proposed data schema, or an indicative or example version of it, during the tender period. The schema is still being refined and any version issued at this stage would risk being superseded before contract award. In broad terms, the schema is expected to be structured in layers: a core product inventory, covering identification, classification, location, opening hours and similar structural attributes; an audit layer, covering the quality, readiness and visitor-experience characteristics of each product; and a wider intelligence layer, capturing destination-level context. The initial five-month delivery is expected to concentrate on establishing the core inventory layer and the highest-priority attributes within it. Attribute sets requiring greater depth or specialist data sources – for example sustainability and regenerative tourism, detailed accessibility information, and further analytical or deep-dive fields – are not confirmed as in scope for the initial term.

		These may instead be delivered as iterative expansions of the schema under Call-Off Year 1 and, subsequently, Call-Off Year 2, at the BTA's discretion. The final schema will be agreed and documented with the successful supplier following award. Bidders should therefore set out in their tender response how their proposed approach, methodology and pricing would accommodate a schema that is defined collaboratively after award and expanded iteratively over the contract term and should state any assumptions made.
3.	**Additional data sources** Are there existing third-party datasets, APIs or data licences available to VisitEngland which the successful supplier will be able to use? If additional commercial data sources are required, are these expected to be funded by the supplier from within the initial Lot 1 budget?	Yes. The BTA has access to some third-party datasets that may be relevant to this procurement, for example Government licences to Ordnance Survey data. These can be made available to the successful supplier, subject to the supplier signing the required contractor licence with the BTA. Any additional third-party datasets, APIs or data licences recommended or proposed by the supplier are expected to be funded by the supplier from within the initial Lot 1 budget. No separate or additional budget is available for data acquisition. The BTA notes that many of the sources likely to be relevant to this audit are available on an open or free-to-use basis, for example changing places datasets and ONS data, with only small charges applying to certain services such as Google Maps. Bidders should identify in their tender response any paid or licensed data sources they propose to use, together with the associated cost and any licence restrictions on the BTA's onward use of the resulting data.
4.	**Azure and Databricks environment** The specification states that the resulting inventory must be ingestible into Azure Databricks. Can you clarify what existing BTA/VisitEngland Azure capabilities will be available to the successful supplier, for example Databricks, storage, Entra ID, Power BI and Azure-hosted AI services?	The BTA will not be providing the successful supplier with access to our Databricks or Entra ID environments. No BTA-hosted storage, Power BI or Azure AI services will be made available for the delivery of this audit, and the supplier is therefore expected to work within its own environment. To ensure the inventory is ingestible into Databricks, the supplier is expected to provide, as a minimum, the completed dataset as .csv or Parquet files available for download from the supplier's own storage, structured to a documented schema agreed with the BTA.

5.	**Deployment of the analytical tool** Is the expectation that the analytical tool itself will ultimately be deployed into and operated from a BTA-controlled Azure environment?	The analytical tool is not required to be deployed into, or operated from, a BTA-controlled Azure environment during the contract term. At the end of the overall contract, including any call-off years, the BTA will assess its own use cases and decide whether to build dashboards from the data for its own purposes. Where the supplier builds any analytical tool for the BTA (for example HTML-based tools or other file types), all source code and supporting technical documentation is expected to be delivered to the BTA at the end of the contract, so that the BTA can decide how best to deploy it within its own environments.
6.	**Ongoing maintenance and support** The ITT states that the solution should be handed over in a form that allows VisitEngland to operate, maintain and develop it independently, while Appendix E also contains requirements relating to support, patching, uptime, SLAs and service management. Can you clarify whether: a) after completion of the initial five-month term, the supplier is expected to provide any ongoing operational maintenance, monitoring, patching, incident management or SLA-backed support as part of the initial Lot 1 price? b) would support and development activity only be undertaken where requested through the optional call-off arrangements and charged using the submitted rate card?	a) Yes. The initial five-month term covers delivery of the audit and the analytical tool, handover to the BTA in a form that allows the BTA to operate, maintain and develop the solution independently, and the provision of ongoing operational support for the solution during that term. Bidders should include this support within the initial Lot 1 price. Support is not intended to cease at the end of the initial five-month term. Where the BTA exercises Call-Off Year 1, and subsequently Call-Off Year 2, the supplier is expected to continue providing the same maintenance, monitoring, patching and incident management throughout each period, charged against the applicable call-off budget using the submitted rate card. Support falls away only where the BTA chooses not to exercise the next call-off period, at which point the solution, source code and supporting documentation are handed over so that the BTA can operate and maintain the solution independently. b) In part. Ongoing support continues for as long as the contract continues, as set out at a) above, and does not need to be separately requested by the BTA. Further development activity will be undertaken only where requested by the BTA through the optional call-off arrangements and will be charged using the day/hourly rates in the submitted rate card.
7.	**Appendix E mandatory requirements** Can you confirm whether every requirement marked "Must" in Appendix E is a mandatory pass/fail requirement for this procurement irrespective of its applicability to the proposed solution?	Response to this question will be included in Clarifications v.02 which will be issued shortly.

	In particular, clarification would be useful around requirements such as independent penetration testing, multiple UK data centres, 4-hour RTO, 99.5% availability, support SLAs, separate development/test/UAT/production environments and ticket management.	
8.	**Penetration testing** Where independent penetration testing is required, is the successful supplier expected to commission and fund this within the initial Lot 1 budget, or will testing be undertaken through existing BTA security arrangements?	Response to this question will be included in Clarifications v.02 which will be issued shortly.
9.	**Intellectual property and background IP** The ITT and draft agreement state that BTA will own the IP created under the contract, including the tool, prompts and methodology. Can you clarify the intended treatment of pre-existing supplier IP, reusable software components, frameworks and methodologies which may be incorporated into the solution? Would the expected position be that BTA owns IP specifically created for this engagement, while existing supplier background IP remains with the supplier with appropriate usage rights granted to BTA?	Yes – that is the expected position. Any IP created specifically for this engagement, including the tool, prompts and methodology, will be owned by the BTA. Pre-existing supplier background IP will remain with the supplier, and where it is incorporated into the deliverables the BTA will require a perpetual, irrevocable, royalty-free, non-exclusive licence to use, maintain and further develop that background IP, so that the BTA's continued use of the solution is not dependent on the supplier. Bidders should identify in their tender response any background IP they propose to incorporate, together with any restrictions on its use.
10.	**Contract extension periods** The ITT describes two optional Lot 1 call-off periods of up to 12 months each. Clause 1.2 of the draft Agreement appears to refer to a single renewal period not exceeding 12 months. Can you confirm that the ITT position of two optional 12-month call-off periods is correct?	Confirmed. The ITT position is correct. Lot 1 comprises the initial five-month delivery period followed by up to two optional call-off periods of up to 12 months each, each exercisable at the BTA's sole discretion. Clause 1.2 of the draft Agreement is inconsistent with this and will be amended prior to issue; a revised draft Agreement will be issued to bidders. Bidders should prepare their responses and pricing on the basis of the ITT position.

11.	**Evidence of experience** Where the evaluation criteria refer to a "proven track record" and delivery team experience, can relevant experience gained by the named individuals in the proposed delivery team through previous employment and engagements be used as supporting evidence, or must the experience have been delivered under the tendering company's own corporate entity?	Relevant experience gained by the named individuals in the proposed delivery team may be used as supporting evidence, including experience gained through previous employment or engagements outside the tendering organisation. The experience does not need to have been delivered under the tendering company's own corporate entity. Where such examples are used, bidders should state clearly which named individual the experience relates to, the role they performed and the outcome delivered, and confirm that the individual will be part of the delivery team for this contract.
12.	**Price evaluation** Can you confirm whether the evaluated "total tender price" for Lot 1 relates to the initial five-month delivery price only, or whether any values from the submitted day/hourly rate card are also included within the price evaluation calculation?	The evaluated "total tender price" for Lot 1 relates to the initial five-month delivery price only, which has an indicative budget ceiling of £30,000. Values from the submitted day/hourly rate card are not included within the price evaluation calculation. The rate card will be used to price work called off during Call-Off Year 1 and Call-Off Year 2 (each up to 12 months, exercisable at the BTA's discretion, with an indicative budget ceiling of £30,000 per call-off year) and to draw down retained support and development hours. Rates submitted must remain valid for the full term of the contract, being the initial five months plus both optional call-off periods, giving a maximum potential contract value of up to approximately £90,000.
13.	**Format of response** Is an ITT Response Document missing from the documentation currently uploaded to this opportunity? There is mention of the parameters for scoring but no response framework for us to populate from what I can see for the main submission, apart from the appendixes? I just wanted to check we are not missing a form before we respond in our own independent format.	There is no specific template for your response, and you may use whichever format you feel is best to convey your proposal. We have not set a word limit for tender responses in relation to the Technical (Quality) Evaluation Criteria. However, we expect tenderers to respond to each of the evaluation criteria clearly and succinctly. We have, however, included a 500-word limit on responses to the Social Value question and we also expect suppliers to respond clearly and succinctly to this section. In addition to the above, you must also complete and submit: • Form of Tender (Appendix B) inc. Schedule A

		• Pricing Schedule (Ex VAT) (Appendix C – Lot 1 / Lot 2) • Data Management & Data Security Questionnaire (Appendix D) • Non-Functional Requirements (Appendix E) • Artificial Intelligence (AI) Questionnaire (Appendix F)