

Meet the Buyer's Event Reply:

1. Would your company be interested in tendering and delivering any of the Heating and Thermal Improvement contract lots in any future procurement exercise?

The feedback indicated that all of the proposed Lots would receive bids if it was tendered on the basis of 6 geographical areas.

2. How many lots do you feel an Economic Operator should be allowed to bid for?

The feedback from the market indicated that the majority of the Economic Operators felt 4 Lots was the optimum number of Lots that they should be allowed to bid for, NIHE have therefore decided to allow bidders to submit tenders up to 4 lots.

3. How many lots do you feel an economic operator should be allowed to win?

There was no majority preference from the market. The number of Economic Operators that requested being able to win a maximum of 1 Lot was the same as those that requested being able to win up to 2 Lots. However given the size of the Lots and the locations, Economic Operators will be limited to win one lot in the first award sequence. However, in order to mitigate the risk of not being able to award all lots, the tender rules will permit the Contracting Authority the right to re-open the award sequence and award an additional lot contract to successful economic operators in accordance with the rules of the Competition. This will promote new entrants to market but mitigate against non-delivery of all lots.

4. Please indicate what you believe the price/quality split should be set for this competition.

The NIHE have enhanced mandated contractual requirements, and the contract has been written to enhance quality in delivery, however, the Project Board has agreed 60% Price and 40% Quality.

5. Whilst we are mandated to assign a minimum of 10% of the Quality Criteria to Social Value this may be increased. What do you believe would be an appropriate percentage of the Award Criteria to assign to Social Value?

Procurement Policy Note 01/21 mandates that tenders must allocate a minimum of 10% of the total award criteria to social value as implemented from June 2022. The NIHE has reviewed feedback and decided to remain award criteria at 10%.

6. Please indicate what you feel would be the ideal contract duration for the proposed contracts.

Feedback received was that the ideal contract duration for the proposed contracts would be 3+4 years. Taking feedback and views into consideration, NIHE decided that the initial service period will be for 3 years from the starting date to a period of up to a further four years.

7. Please indicate the quantity of Heating and Thermal Improvement Contract lots you would wish to be considered for the potential award of and would be capable of delivering without experiencing capacity issues.

Based on the lot size and the length of the contract, the feedback received that 1 lot should be awarded to a single company. Please refer to above 2&3.

8. NIHE are considering including a number of work streams in the contract. Please confirm which work streams you feel should be included.

Following discussions and feedback, together with mixed views on work streams and the possibility of restricting tenderers from bidding, the NIHE have therefore decided to remove Cavity Wall Installation from the contracts.

9. Which of the following KPI's do you feel it would be reasonable to include in the Contract?

The feedback received was reviewed and noted and found that there was a majority of company's views that the current KPI format is reasonable and adequate, while one company's comments related to the high number of KPI's currently being used. Following feedback the NIHE have decided to maintain the KPI's in its current format in order to continue to help measure progress against objectives.

10. Is your company likely to need to enter a consortium, e.g., a joint venture arrangement, in order to have the capacity to deliver any lots of interest?

Individual feedback was provided and noted as company's identified their preference on returns.

11. Please confirm if your company currently has PAS2030 and PAS2035 Certification. If not does your company currently comply with PAS2030 and PAS2035 and would you be in a position to obtain certification prior to the contract start date of 1st June 2024. If you are already PAS2035 certified has this been accredited by Trustmark License Plus?

Individual feedback was provided and noted as company's identified their preference on returns.

12. In your company's view, what are the key risks associated with the successful procurement and operation of the Heating and Thermal Improvement contracts and how could they be resolved?

Company's highlighted the shortage of labour in the market and all contractors looking to utilise the same pool of resources. To help capacity issues, the NIHE have included mandated training and apprenticeship programmes through the contract to help current demands.

13. In your company's view, what are the key opportunities that NIHE should consider when finalising the procurement strategy?

Company's emphasised feedback of partnership working between contractors and NIHE and requirement of longer mobilisation period. The

NIHE has concluded that contract award date during Nov 2023 will allow this.

14. Is your organisation aware of any skills or capacity issues within the industry that may impact on the successful procurement and operation of the Heating and Thermal Improvement contracts?

Company's acknowledged that there is ongoing labour shortages within the market. As above, to help capacity issues the NIHE have included mandated training and apprenticeship programmes through the contract to help current demands.

15. Please provide details of any supervening market factors that would stop you from bidding and suggestions for how they could be managed.

The NIHE have acknowledged rising costs and have moved to annual CPI uplifts rather than held fixed for the first two years. The NIHE also acknowledge skills shortages as our response to above 14 identifies our intentions moving forward.

16. Are you aware of current requirements in relation to Social Value in line with CPD Procurement Policy Note PPN 01/21 - Scoring Social Value and are you capable of meeting the requirements of the policy note. Please also highlight any market issues that may affect delivery of social value requirements and what percentage of the quality criteria should be allocated to social value?

Feedback received was that all Contractors are fully aware of current requirements in relation to social value in line with CPD Procurement Policy note PPN 01/21. No feedback received with regards to any market issues that may affect delivery of social value requirements. As per 5 above, the NIHE has reviewed feedback and decided to remain award criteria at 10%.

Indicative Timeline below for Regional Heating Contracts 2024:

- Invitation to Tender end July 2023
- Contract award November 2023