

## RESEARCH REQUIREMENTS DOCUMENT FOR STRATEGIC CHALLENGES 2011 - FS246004

### Food Standards Agency Strategic Challenge on Food Security

#### Introduction

Generally the Food Standards Agency issues calls for evidence to address detailed specific research questions. In this call the Agency is piloting a new initiative in an open call for innovative proposals for potentially high-risk / high-gain projects, using new approaches that could lead to significant leaps forward in addressing our strategic challenges.

The focus of this requirement is on scientific excellence and the innovative potential of the research and is not prescriptive about the approaches to be used. If the proposal takes the form of a feasibility study we require a high quality concept note demonstrating how the work will bring us further on a clear path to addressing our challenges.

#### We have identified Four Challenges

We invite proposals to address the following issues, related to the Government's food security agenda and Agency policy objectives:

**1. How to ensure that imported food is safe to eat, including early identification of emerging risks**

This is an important challenge for the Agency and we particularly seek approaches that enable effective targeting of resources.

**2. How to use novel methods in managing foodborne disease outbreaks**

Methods could include techniques such as molecular epidemiology to provide rapid and accurate data to inform decisions and appropriate actions.

**3. How to raise levels of compliance with food safety law in food businesses**

We are particularly interested in proposals based on scientific and technological advances but are open to other approaches such as consideration of individual and organisational behaviours.

**4. How to obtain better data on costs to industry for impact assessments to inform Agency policies**

An example could be on the policy of charging for official controls on food safety (such as inspections in slaughterhouses and Local Authority checks on compliance with food safety legislation). This is a more specific challenge and we would like both to obtain data and to find better ways of obtaining data for future policy development and the cost of different regulation (taking a holistic approach that is regardless of who the competent authority is), to include for example (i) better market segmentation, (ii) quantification of costs and (iii) information on who the costs are passed on to.

We encourage potential contractors to draw on an international perspective in addressing these challenges. We would also encourage applications based on interdisciplinary working. This call could lead to funding of, for example, desk, proof of principle or scoping/feasibility studies to develop innovative ideas; or the funding of top-ups to existing work that is not currently relevant to the food area but could be adapted to be so.

The Agency has a total initial funding pot of around £100,000 available for this call to cover all 4 areas, with potential for flexibility in exceptional circumstances. We expect to fund up to 4 projects in total and that these would begin in November 2011, with projects of up to approximately 6 months in length. However, we reserve the right to fund either more shorter/less expensive or fewer larger/more expensive projects; and in the event of lack of balance of proposals across the challenges or several similar-ranking proposals, to balance the spending so that the best use is made of the funding across the 4 challenge areas.

### **Further information**

In considering these Challenges you may like to refer to the Agency's public documents as follows:

Food Standards Agency Strategy to 2015

<http://www.food.gov.uk/aboutus/publications/busreps/strategicplan/>

Food Standards Agency Science and Evidence Strategy 2010 to 2015, updated in 2011

<http://www.food.gov.uk/science/researchpolicy/scistrat>

Board Paper from meeting held 25 January 2011, Food Safety Official Controls Delivery

<http://www.food.gov.uk/multimedia/pdfs/board/fsa110104.pdf>

### **THE TECHNICAL ENVELOPE**

**Please note:**

**If you wish to apply for more than one challenge, please complete separate technical envelopes for each challenge under the relevant lot for that challenge.**

**If you wish to submit more than one application for the same challenge, please submit separate technical envelopes for each application, but upload these as one file under the relevant lot for that challenge.**

**Part 1 Description of scientific approach and work plan.** Describe in detail your approach, which will provide evidence to address one of the specific strategic challenges provided in this Call for Tender. Your proposal should clearly show an understanding of the policy need for the evidence and describe and justify the methodology and research design to be used in order to meet the aims and objectives of this project. You should describe the potential impact, novelty and quality of concept for the project. It should demonstrate how this will lead to a significant step forward in addressing our strategic challenges, or bring us further on a clear path to doing so.

Please describe the relevance of the proposed work to the Agency by:

- summarising the current state of knowledge in the area;
- describing the evidence gap being addressed in the proposal;
- explaining the scientific and technological basis for the work proposed; and
- Explaining in what respect the project will advance knowledge in the area or may be expected to provide the information or outcome indicated by the requirement.

Please provide a description of the scientific/technological objectives and workplan for this project (written in the third person) detailing:

- the individual objectives and expected achievements;
- the scientific approaches and work plan, with the key personnel involved and timing for each;
- the project outputs.

This section should ideally not exceed 15 pages of A4 in length.

### **Evaluation of Part 1 Technical - Weighting: 50%**

For a score of 9, the proposal clearly indicates that the Tenderer has understood the policy need and the requirements in relation to this tender in terms of potential impact, novel and innovative nature and quality of concept. It should demonstrate how this will lead to a significant step forward in addressing our challenges, or bring us further on a clear path to doing so. The Tenderer has translated this into a suitable and robust proposal with detailed and realistic outcomes and objectives. The proposal clearly describes and justifies the appropriate methods and research design used in order to meet the aims and objectives of the project and presented a comprehensive, detailed and realistic project plan which is achievable. It is clear from the proposal that the resultant evidence will inform policy and that the published research specification has been fully met. All ethical considerations relating to the project have been considered and discussed in the proposal document.

For a score of 3, the proposal addresses most of the points above, but misses, or is not detailed enough, in some aspects.

For a score of 1, the Tenderer has understood the policy need but has not presented a realistic and achievable proposal. Some aspects have not been addressed.

For a score of 0, the Tenderer has presented a proposal that is clearly out of step with the policy and outcomes and objectives have not been accurately or robustly presented.

### **Part 2 Organisational experience, Expertise and Capacity**

Please describe the experience and expertise of all parties on this bid and the roles of key personnel. Please describe how different organisations will interact and what each party brings to the project. Please describe in this section, up to three key examples of your previous experience, including a description of how those examples relate to this Project. Please give up to 5 of the most recent and relevant peer reviewed publications for each of the key investigators.

### **Evaluation of Part 2 - Weighting: 30%**

For a score of 9, the Tenderer has described, in detail, how the various parts of the Organisation or consortium will support the Project, both directly and indirectly. The Tenderer has referenced the entire supply chain activities for the Project, highlighting any collaborations/sub-contractors. The Tenderer will have drawn on previous projects and peer reviewed publications to detail their expertise and track record in this area of work. The quality and experience of the key personnel, other resources including sub-contractors if used, supply chain, knowledge-based systems and existing data should be relevant, of a high standard and appropriate.

For a score of 3, the Tenderer has presented a detailed account of how the Organisation's resources will be deployed in this Project, but has little or no evidence of previous experience in this area.

For a score of 1, the Tenderer is heavily dependent on its supply chain rather than in-house expertise.

For a score of 0, it is clear that the Tenderer does not have the scientific capability and capacity to deliver the project in a prime contractor role.

### **Part 3 Project and Risk Management**

Please describe how the project will be managed to ensure that all milestones and deliverables will be achieved on time and on budget. You should describe any in house or external accreditation for your management system and how it relates to this project. Full details should be given of the measures that will be taken to manage and assure the quality of the work. This should include information on the quality assurance (QA) systems, of both the research processes and science, which have been implemented or are planned. Applicants should indicate their compliance with the Joint Code of Practice for Research. Please identify the potential risks relating to this project and the steps that will be taken to mitigate those risks. Please also describe your communications plan outlining how, where and to whom the project results will be communicated.

#### **Evaluation of Part 3 - Weighting: 20%**

For a score of 9, the Tenderer has presented a comprehensive management plan, which gives assurance that the project will deliver on time and on budget and risks to the project have been identified and mitigating actions proposed. The Tenderer complies with the Joint Code of Practice for Research.

For a score of 3, the Tenderer has submitted a moderate management plan but there are significant omissions which does not give assurance that the project will deliver on time and in budget. Some risks to the project have not been identified.

For a score of 1, the Tenderer has submitted a management and risk management plan but there is insufficient detail to accurately determine whether the plan is realistic.

For a score of 0, the Tenderer has failed to address the project and risk aspects adequately.

## FINANCIAL TEMPLATE

Please note:

If you wish to apply for more than one challenge, or to submit more than one application for the same challenge, please complete separate financial templates for each application, but upload these as one file.

Please complete each of the tables in the template provided. Costs should be quoted excluding VAT for the purpose of comparison of tenders. The Agency's financial year runs from 1 April to 31 March. All costings should be recorded in line with this timescale.

For a score of 9 the Tenderer has provided the best value for money for the work proposed to meet the requirement advertised.

For a score of 3 the Tenderer has provided costs which do not offer the best value for money, but are not far off those of the project with the best value for money.

For a score of 1 the Tenderer has submitted a project with significantly higher costs and is relatively poor value for money.

For a score of 0 the Tenderer has submitted costs which do not offer value for money.

### Evaluation of Tenders

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Please refer to ITT for details

| HIGH LEVEL EVALUATION CRITERIA FOR SELECTION OF SUCCESSFUL TENDERER |                       |
|---|-----------------------|
| CRITERION   | PERCENTAGE WEIGHTINGS |
| <b>TECHNICAL CRITERIA – 80% Overall Value</b>                       | Made up of            |
| Scientific approach and work plan                                   | 50%                   |
| Organisational Capacity/Capability                                  | 30%                   |
| Project and Risk Management   | 20%                   |
|   |                       |
| <b>FINANCIAL CRITERIA (MEAT) 20% Overall Value</b>                  |                       |

**PLEASE ENSURE YOU UPLOAD ALL OF YOUR FILES BEFORE SUBMITTING YOUR RESPONSE**