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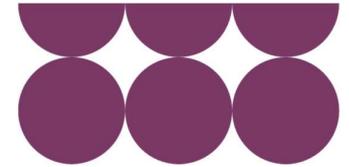
March 2026

Early Competition Tender Process

Appendix C: Invitation to Tender Questionnaire

NESO
National Energy
System Operator

The logo graphic for NESO, consisting of a stylized white symbol resembling a compass rose or a set of four arrows pointing outwards from a central point, located to the right of the text.

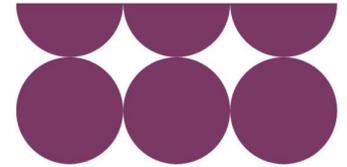


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Introduction

This document contains the Invitation to Tender (ITT) stage qualitative questions. The purpose of these questions is to enable the Delivery Body to assess Qualifying Bidder's proposed approach to developing their Preferred Solution, the Preferred Solution itself, and their ability to deliver their Preferred Solution to the Qualifying Project. It contains the following questions (several of which have sub-questions which must be answered):

- **Question 1. Options assessment:** Qualifying Bidders are to describe the process they followed to determine their Preferred Solution
- **Question 2. Qualifying Bidder's Preferred Solution:** Qualifying Bidders are to describe in detail their Preferred Solution to the Qualifying Project and demonstrate that it meets the technical requirements outlined in the Tendered Scope of Works
- **Question 3. Preliminary Works – design:** the Qualifying Bidder's approach to designing their Preferred Solution is to be described
- **Question 4. Preliminary Works – planning and consenting:** a strategy for planning and consenting is required, alongside the Qualifying Bidder's intended approach to consultation, and their proposals for delivering community benefits and/or environmental enhancements
- **Question 5. Preliminary Works – land [and seabed] rights:** Qualifying Bidders are required to provide a detailed strategy for acquiring the necessary land [and seabed] rights for the Qualifying Project
- **Question 6. Construction:** a construction phase plan is to be provided, as well as details of the Qualifying Bidder's management systems for health and safety and environment and sustainability during the construction phase
- **Question 7. Risk assessment and mitigation:** Qualifying Bidders are required to provide a risk assessment which identifies risks and mitigation measures
- **Question 8. Programme:** a programme for the Preliminary Works and construction (including commissioning) phases is to be provided by Qualifying Bidders
- **Question 9. Operation and maintenance:** Qualifying Bidders are to describe their asset management approach and their proposals for maintaining operational availability and responding to major failure events, ensuring operability, and mitigating physical and cyber security risks
- **Question 10. Approach to pricing:** qualitative questions relating to Qualifying Bidder's approach to pricing
- **Question 11. Financing strategy:** qualitative questions assessing Qualifying Bidder's financing proposals



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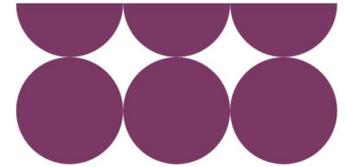
The document is structured such that each question is followed immediately by its corresponding evaluation criteria. This is to facilitate Qualifying Bidder's ability to see the criteria against which each question will be marked.

The majority of questions will be scored, with scores of 0-4 available. However, Question 2 and Question 11.3 will be evaluated on a 'Pass/Fail' basis. If Qualifying Bidders fail either of these questions, they will be disqualified from the tender process, regardless of any scores they may have received for the other qualitative ITT questions.

Page limits and formatting requirements

The applicable page limits are stated for each question. Responses must be provided in A4 page size (portrait or landscape layout is acceptable) and use Arial font of minimum font size 10. Qualifying Bidders should take note that for some questions, the page limit set is exclusive of certain supplementary material (for example drawings and figures), while for others, the set page limit must include all such items.

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Question 1. Options assessment

In developing their Preferred Solution, Qualifying Bidders are required to undertake an options assessment and to provide a detailed options study report describing this assessment. The options study report must include details of:

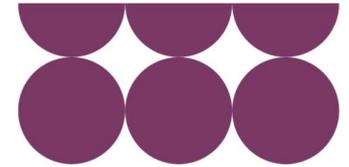
- The possible alternative technical solutions (within the parameters set by the Tendered Scope of Works) to meeting the technical requirements of the Qualifying Project that were considered by the Qualifying Bidder, as well as their Preferred Solution
- The possible corridor options within the spatial envelope set by the Tendered Scope of Works that were considered by the Qualifying Bidder, as well as the corridor for their Preferred Solution
- An economic analysis of each of the technical and corridor options considered as part of the study

The options assessment must have considered viable alternative technical solutions and at least three possible corridors. With reference to the Electricity Transmission Design Principles (ETDP), the Holford Rules and Horlock Rules, relevant planning policy, and a clearly described assessment methodology, the options study report must set out the technical, planning and consenting (including environmental and community), and economic factors relevant to each of the assessed technical and corridor options. The benefits and/or disbenefits associated with each of the options should be presented.

The options study report should conclude with a statement on how the Qualifying Bidder determined their Preferred Solution, balancing the various technical, planning/environmental and economic factors associated with the options considered in the study.

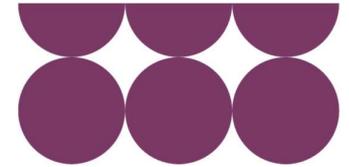
Qualifying Bidders are reminded that the options study is to be based on information collected from desk-based sources or from manned aircraft (i.e. not including unmanned aerial systems or vehicles (UAS or UAV)) only.

The page limit for Question 1 is 40 A4 pages (not including accompanying figures, which will not count towards the page limit).

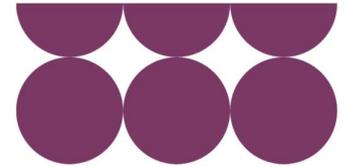


Evaluation criteria for Question 1. Options assessment

ITT Question 1				
Options assessment				
No submission (0)	Poor (1)	Satisfactory (2)	Good (3)	Excellent (4)
<p>A response has not been provided.</p>	<p>The response provided does not demonstrate that the Qualifying Bidder has carried out a suitably thorough options assessment and/or that the Qualifying Bidder has selected a suitable option for their Preferred Solution.</p> <p>Features of a 'Poor' response may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The minimum number of corridor alternatives (as specified in the question) are not included in the options assessment The technical and/or corridor options included in the assessment are not sufficiently distinct to enable a reasonable assessment of possible alternative solutions A description of the assessment method adopted, including evaluation criteria, is not provided or the assessment method is unclearly or inconsistently applied If an assessment method and evaluation criteria are provided, 	<p>The response provided demonstrates that the Qualifying Bidder has carried out a reasonable options assessment and, based on the outcomes of this exercise, has selected a suitable option for their Preferred Solution.</p> <p>Features of a 'Satisfactory' response may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The minimum number of corridor alternatives have been assessed, but the level of detail involved in the assessment is limited A high-level description of the assessment method is provided, and this is applied clearly and consistently The options study considers all relevant decision criteria including environmental impacts, construction risks, community impacts and capital and operational costs The assessment method and adopted evaluation criteria align with the ETD, the Holford and/or Horlock Rules The sources of data used to inform the assessment are 	<p>The response provided demonstrates that the Qualifying Bidder has carried out a robust options assessment and, based on the outcomes of this exercise, has clearly selected the optimal option for their Preferred Solution.</p> <p>Features of a 'Good' response may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> At least the minimum number of corridor alternatives have been assessed, and a detailed analysis of each is provided The technical and/or corridor alternatives assessed cover a broad range of possible options (within the parameters set by the Tendered Scope of Works) A detailed description of the assessment method is provided, alongside a comprehensive set of evaluation criteria (which align with the ETD, the Holford and/or Horlock Rules); the method and criteria are transparently and consistently applied throughout the assessment 	<p>'Excellent' responses are those which meet the evaluation criteria for a 'Good' response, but which also incorporate further added value to the assessment.</p> <p>Features of an 'Excellent' response may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is clear evidence of strategic insight in the evaluation and selection of options Consideration has been given to innovative technical solutions, and the Qualifying Bidder has clearly demonstrated that innovation in their Preferred Solution will deliver benefits in terms of reduced consenting, land acquisition, programme, construction and/or operational risks Innovative approach(es) and/or digital tools have been used when carrying out the options assessment, with clear benefits in terms of reliability of the outcomes and/or reduced risks to delivery of the Preferred Solution



ITT Question 1				
Options assessment				
No submission (0)	Poor (1)	Satisfactory (2)	Good (3)	Excellent (4)
	<p>these do not align with the ETD, the Holford and/or Horlock Rules</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The sources of data used to inform the assessment are inadequate or inappropriate No consideration is given to relevant planning policy An economic assessment is not included Key risks or constraints have been missed in the assessment The rationale for the selection of the Preferred Solution (instead of alternatives considered) is not provided or is poorly justified 	<p>appropriate and no key resources have been missed</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reference is made to alignment with relevant planning policy The key risks or constraints associated with each of the assessed options have been identified The economic assessment is based on a narrow range of qualitative factors The option study is cognisant of Ofgem's g Pre-Approval of Solution by Engineering (PASE) framework and the options considered are either PASE-compliant or justification is provided for any deviations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A clear assessment of alignment with relevant planning policy is included The key risks or constraints associated with each of the assessed options have been clearly identified A detailed economic assessment, including qualitative and quantitative factors, has been carried out A cost-benefit analysis using a net present value (NPV) basis has been carried out and presented for each option There is a clear articulation of the benefits and disbenefits of each of the assessed options, and a robust rationale provided for the selection of the option for the Preferred Solution The options study report is clear, coherent and well-structured and is supported by figures, maps, charts, diagrams, etc, where relevant 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As well as identifying risks, the opportunities associated with the assessed options are also discussed; in this way, the options study report may identify significant added value associated with the Preferred Solution compared to other options considered



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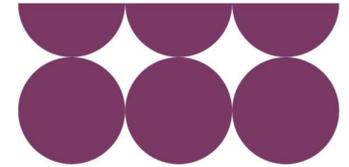
Question 2. Qualifying Bidder's Preferred Solution

Having carried out a detailed options assessment, Qualifying Bidders are to provide details of their Preferred Solution. This must include all technical information necessary to demonstrate that their Preferred Solution meets the technical requirements outlined in the Tendered Scope of Works. Qualifying Bidders should include in their response:

- **A technical description of the Preferred Solution** – including the physical works and link to the network need that the solution meets. The description should be supported by single-line diagrams, schematic diagrams, and indicative routing diagrams for context. The description should determine the technology readiness level of the various elements of the Preferred Solution
- **Interaction with other projects** – illustrating that 'Interactive Options' are not restricted in the Preferred Solution, where these options are referenced in the Tendered Scope of Works
- **Network model** – Qualifying Bidders are to provide an updated power system network model which enables Load Flow, Short Circuits, Transient Stability and Voltage Stability studies of the Preferred Solution (note that the model must be provided in DigSILENT PowerFactory software, version 2024 or later)

Qualifying Bidders should note that this question will be marked on a Pass/Fail basis, rather than being scored. Only the criteria which a Qualifying Bidder must satisfy to pass this question are outlined; Qualifying Bidders are to interpret this to mean that if they do not meet these minimum requirements, then they will fail the question.

The page limit for Question 2 is ten A4 pages, exclusive of single-line diagrams and any other drawings or figures.



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Evaluation criteria for Question 2. Qualifying Bidder's Preferred Solution

ITT Question 2

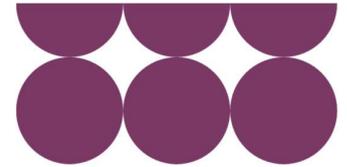
Qualifying Bidder's Preferred Solution

Pass

The response is comprehensive and fully addresses the question. It is supported by relevant evidence and information which demonstrates that the Qualifying Bidder's Preferred Solution will meet the requirements set out in the Tendered Scope of Works.

The following are included in the response:

- Single-line diagram(s) of the circuit and schematic diagram of the substations of the Preferred Solution, clearly illustrating how the configuration will look, including circuits and substation layouts
- A technical report with relevant analysis demonstrating how the Preferred Solution meets the requirements associated with Interactive Options, per the Tendered Scope of Works
- A power system model which enables Load Flow, Short Circuits, Transient Stability and Voltage Stability studies and confirms that the technical parameters set out in the Tendered Scope of Works will be met. To ensure consistency and comparability of submissions, the power-system model must be provided in Digsilent PowerFactory software (version 2024 or later)
- Confirmation that all assets of the Preferred Solution meet technology readiness level of 8 or higher, alongside appropriate supporting evidence



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Question 3. Preliminary Works – design

3.1. Design resourcing

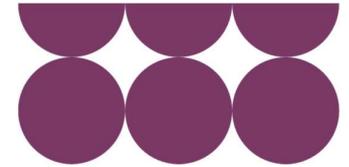
Qualifying Bidders are to identify how design capability will be acquired throughout all stages of the design process. This may either be an in-house resource or an external organisation, and Qualifying Bidders should make this clear.

The response should explain how the capability will be integrated within the wider Qualifying Bidder team and provide information on the depth of resource within the design team, including the number of design team members and team structure.

Qualifying Bidders are required to confirm that the proposed design capability will be responsible for the entire design process for the Qualifying Project.

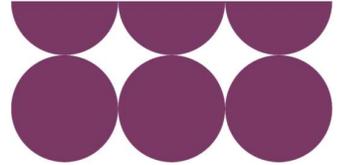
The page limit for Question 3.1 is four A4 pages, inclusive of all diagrams and/or other supporting information.

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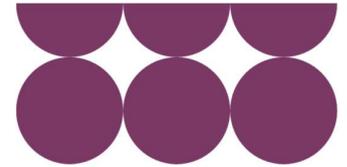
Evaluation criteria for Question 3.1. Design resourcing

ITT Question 3.1				
Preliminary Works – design				
Design resourcing				
No submission (0)	Poor (1)	Satisfactory (2)	Good (3)	Excellent (4)
<p>A response has not been provided.</p>	<p>The Qualifying Bidder has not demonstrated that an experienced design resource has been, or will be, secured and/or that there is sufficient capacity within the design team to deliver a project of the nature and scale of the Qualifying Project.</p> <p>Features of a ‘Poor’ response may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The response does not explain how the design resource will be integrated within the wider Qualifying Bidder team • No or limited information is provided on the depth of the design team or the structure of the team • The response does not give confidence the main design packages have been considered in developing the proposals • It is unclear who in the Qualifying Bidder’s team will be responsible for managing the design process 	<p>The Qualifying Bidder has demonstrated that they intend to procure a suitably experienced design resource and this will be embedded within the wider Qualifying Bidder team. There is evidence that the depth of design resource to be available will be sufficient to deliver a project of the nature and scale of the Qualifying Project.</p> <p>Features of a ‘Satisfactory’ response may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The response provides some detail on how the design resource will be integrated within the wider Qualifying Bidder team, including a simple strategy for communication and collaboration with other teams • The number of design team members is identified and key roles are stated • The response clearly confirms that the design resource will be responsible for the entire design process for the Qualifying Project, including the final detailed design 	<p>The Qualifying Bidder has already secured highly experienced design resource which can demonstrate a track record of recently designing projects similar in nature and scale to the Qualifying Project. The design team contains a depth of resource and will be fully integrated within the wider Qualifying Bidder team, reducing delivery risks.</p> <p>A ‘Good’ response will meet the evaluation criteria for a ‘Satisfactory’ response but will also contain other features, which may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A detailed strategy for collaboration is provided and this identifies the key teams with which the design team will need to work most closely; communication methods and approaches to effective cross-disciplinary working are set out • Evidence-based approach using lessons learned from similar large-scale infrastructure projects. 	<p>‘Excellent’ responses are those which meet the evaluation criteria for a ‘Good’ response, but which also incorporate further added value to the design process in terms of the Qualifying Bidder’s readiness to deliver the design process, and ability to manage risks. This may include supply chain management practices and contingencies.</p> <p>An ‘Excellent’ response may include the following additional features</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proposes cross-supplier governance models, e.g. Joint decision boards, integrated planning teams, shared interface KPIs and incentives • Proactive development of the supply chain—e.g., early engagement, frameworks, or partnership models in place with proposed design partners. • Demonstrates how behavioural frameworks or alliance-style working will manage design interfaces and drive shared accountability.



ITT Question 3.1				
Preliminary Works – design				
Design resourcing				
No submission (0)	Poor (1)	Satisfactory (2)	Good (3)	Excellent (4)
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Where external resource is being acquired through the supply chain, it is clear how this resource will be procured, with indicative plans included within the programme Key design interfaces identified with a basic plan for managing coordination between packages 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An organogram is provided, with key roles assigned and a clear chain of authority A skills/competency matrix is provided for the various roles within the design resource Where external resource is being used, a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), or similar arrangement, is in place with the design resource, confirming their readiness to commence and their availability to the Qualifying Bidder for the duration of the design process 	

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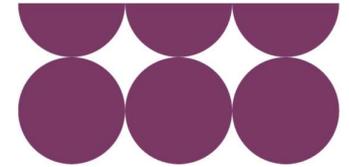
3.2. Design approach

Qualifying Bidders are to explain their approach to designing their Preferred Solution. The response should describe the following:

- Design work packages
- Survey and data collection strategies needed to inform the design of the permanent and temporary works
- The gated process for design assurance and internal sign off
- The key design and industry standards that will be employed during the design phase for each of the assets to be delivered, split into relevant categories (for example overhead lines, underground cables, substations, protection and control systems, communication and telemetry, etc)

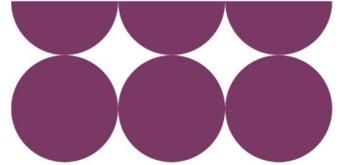
Qualifying Bidders must also demonstrate that the design and industry standards utilised for each category are suitable for ensuring the safe and proper use of the asset for the required licence period, plus any possible extension. The design must align with the relevant NESO codes (System Operator Transmission Owner Code (STC) and the associated Procedures (STCPs), Grid Code (GC), Security and Quality of Supply Standard (SQSS), and Connection and Use of System Code (CUSC)) and, at the interface points, the incumbent Transmission Owner's (TO) specification.

The page limit for Question 3.2 is five A4 pages, inclusive of all diagrams and/or other supporting information.



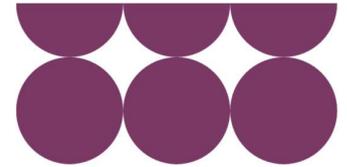
Evaluation criteria for Question 3.2. Design approach

ITT Question 3.2				
Preliminary Works – design				
Design approach				
No submission (0)	Poor (1)	Satisfactory (2)	Good (3)	Excellent (4)
<p>A response has not been provided.</p>	<p>The Qualifying Bidder’s proposed approach to designing their Preferred Solution is deficient in one or more area(s) and lacks reliability.</p> <p>Features of a ‘Poor’ response may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An engineering and design works package has been created at a high level but misses some key deliverables • The design sequence does not follow a logical process • Surveys and data collection proposals miss key elements • Design assurance and sign off proposals are not clear • There is no or limited consideration of supply chain issues or use of supply chain to facilitate the design of the Qualifying Bidder’s Preferred Solution • It is not clear what standards are to be used during the design process, or the proposed approach does not give 	<p>The Qualifying Bidder’s proposed approach addresses the key requirements for designing their Preferred Solution but provides no evidence of how previous experience has informed their approach.</p> <p>Features of a ‘Satisfactory’ response may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A preliminary engineering/design works package list has been developed in conjunction with engineering scope, covering the main design works packages • The design sequence is based on the construction execution sequence • Surveys and data collection proposals cover the key elements of design • Design assurance and sign off proposals are clear and thorough • The Qualifying Bidder has demonstrated that the design is safe and operable for the required licence period 	<p>The Qualifying Bidder’s approach to designing their Preferred Solution is clear and robust. There is evidence that it has been developed based on the Qualifying Bidder’s previous experience.</p> <p>A ‘Good’ response will meet the evaluation criteria for a ‘Satisfactory’ response but will also contain other features, which may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The approach is supported by case studies, including of the Qualifying Bidder’s own experience; lessons learned have been incorporated into the proposed approach • The delivery of design packages is based on a risk-based approach • The approach to survey and data collection demonstrates clear benefits in terms of de-risking the design process and/or construction/ operational activities • The proposed approach to design clearly interlinks with the 	<p>‘Excellent’ responses are those which meet the evaluation criteria for a ‘Good’ response, but which also incorporate further added value to the design process.</p> <p>Features of an ‘Excellent’ response may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Qualifying Bidder has developed an initial, high-level design for their Preferred Solution • The Qualifying Bidder clearly demonstrates that they will adopt sustainable design principles to minimise environmental and/or community impacts • The Qualifying Bidder proposes the use of innovative approach(es), including digital tools, which will enhance and/or de-risk the design process and/or construction/operational activities in a measurable way; this may include novel techniques for survey which expedite data collection or increase the reliability of the data collected



ITT Question 3.2				
Preliminary Works – design				
Design approach				
No submission (0)	Poor (1)	Satisfactory (2)	Good (3)	Excellent (4)
	confidence that the assets will be designed in a suitable manner	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A high-level description of the Qualifying Bidder’s approach to managing supply chain is provided Industry standard design standards are to be employed (for example, relevant British, European, CENELC and/or IEC standard have been referenced) or, where deviating, clear evidence of the benefit and appropriateness of the deviation has been demonstrated The design aligns with the requirements of the NESO codes 	<p>Qualifying Bidder’s planning and consenting strategy and other elements of their Preliminary Works and, in doing so, demonstrably reduces risk (for example of programme delays or of consents not being obtained)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The proposed approach to design is clear, coherent and well-structured and is supported by figures, charts, diagrams, etc, where relevant 	

Question 4. Preliminary Works – planning and consenting



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Question 4 pertains to the process of obtaining the approvals/consents required to permit the construction and operation of the Qualifying Bidder's Preferred Solution. Qualifying Bidders are required to provide a detailed description of their proposed approach to planning and consenting, including environmental and social impact assessment, and to consulting with stakeholders.

Question 4 is broken down into multiple sections, each with its own evaluation criteria.

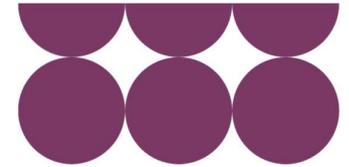
4.1. Planning and consenting resourcing

Qualifying Bidders are to identify how Planning and Consenting specialist capability will be acquired and secured for the duration of the Preliminary Works phase. This may either be an in-house resource or a Supporting Organisation, and Qualifying Bidders should make this clear.

The response should explain how the capability will be integrated within the wider Qualifying Bidder team and provide information on the depth of resource within the Planning and Consenting Specialist team, including the number of team members and team structure.

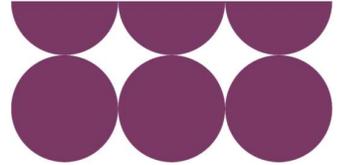
Qualifying Bidders are required to confirm that the proposed Planning and Consenting Specialist capability will be responsible for the entire consenting process for the Qualifying Project.

The page limit for Question 4.1 is four A4 pages, inclusive of all diagrams and/or other supporting information.



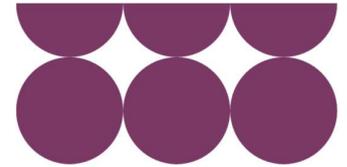
Evaluation criteria for Question 4.1. Planning and consenting resourcing

ITT Question 4.1				
Preliminary Works – planning and consenting				
Planning and consenting resourcing				
No submission (0)	Poor (1)	Satisfactory (2)	Good (3)	Excellent (4)
<p>A response has not been provided.</p>	<p>The Qualifying Bidder has not demonstrated that an experienced Planning and Consenting Specialist resource has been, or will be, secured and/or that there is sufficient capacity within the Planning and Consenting Specialist team to deliver a project of the nature and scale of the Qualifying Project.</p> <p>Features of a 'Poor' response may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The response does not explain how the Planning and Consenting Specialist will be integrated within the wider Qualifying Bidder team No or limited information is provided on the depth of the Planning and Consenting Specialist team or the structure of the team The response does not clearly confirm that the Planning and Consenting Specialist resource will be responsible for the entire duration of the consenting process for the Qualifying Project 	<p>The Qualifying Bidder has demonstrated that they intend to procure a suitably experienced Planning and Consenting Specialist resource and this will be embedded within the wider Qualifying Bidder team. There is evidence that the depth of Planning and Consenting Specialist resource to be available will be sufficient to deliver a project of the nature and scale of the Qualifying Project.</p> <p>Features of a 'Satisfactory' response may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The response provides some detail on how the Planning and Consenting Specialist resource will be integrated within the wider Qualifying Bidder team, including a simple strategy for communication and collaboration with other teams The number of Planning and Consenting Specialist team members is identified and key roles are stated 	<p>The Qualifying Bidder has already secured highly experienced Planning and Consenting Specialist resource which can demonstrate a track record of recently obtaining consents for projects similar in nature and scale to the Qualifying Project. The Planning and Consenting Specialist team contains a depth of resource and will be fully integrated within the wider Qualifying Bidder team, reducing delivery risks.</p> <p>A 'Good' response will meet the evaluation criteria for a 'Satisfactory' response but will also contain other features, which may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A detailed strategy for collaboration is provided and this identifies the key teams with which the Planning and Consenting Specialist team will need to work most closely; communication methods and approaches to effective cross-disciplinary working are set out 	<p>'Excellent' responses are those which meet the evaluation criteria for a 'Good' response, but which also incorporate further added value to the planning and consenting process in terms of the Qualifying Bidder's readiness to deliver the consenting process, and ability to manage risks. This may include supply chain management practices and contingencies.</p>



ITT Question 4.1				
Preliminary Works – planning and consenting				
Planning and consenting resourcing				
No submission (0)	Poor (1)	Satisfactory (2)	Good (3)	Excellent (4)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It is unclear who in the Qualifying Bidder's team will be responsible for managing the planning and consenting process 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The response clearly confirms that the Planning and Consenting Specialist resource will be responsible for the entire consenting process for the Qualifying Project Where external resource is being acquired through the supply chain, it is clear how this resource will be procured, with indicative plans included within the programme 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An organogram is provided, with key roles assigned and a clear chain of authority A skills/competency matrix is provided for the various roles within the Planning and Consenting resource Where external resource is being used, a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), or similar arrangement, is in place with the Planning and Consenting Specialist resource, confirming their readiness to commence and their availability to the Qualifying Bidder for the duration of the consenting process 	

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4.2. Planning and consenting strategy

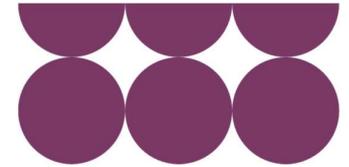
Qualifying Bidders are to provide a comprehensive strategy detailing how they will obtain all necessary primary and secondary consents for their Preferred Solution. The strategy should identify:

- The approvals/consents that will be required
- All of the studies, surveys, assessments, documents, and other pre-application activities which they expect will be required to obtain the necessary approvals/consents
- The post-submission activities that the Qualifying Bidder considers are likely to be required (for example, to discharge requirements or conditions associated with the primary consent(s), or involvement in judicial review)

Qualifying Bidders are encouraged to support their response to this question by drawing on and describing their prior experience of obtaining consents for infrastructure development in the UK.

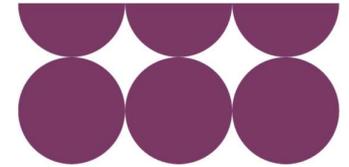
The page limit for Question 4.2 is ten A4 pages, inclusive of all diagrams and/or other supporting information.

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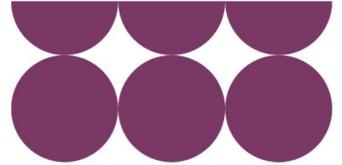


Evaluation criteria for Question 4.2. Planning and consenting strategy

ITT Question 4.2				
Preliminary Works – planning and consenting				
Planning and consenting strategy				
No submission (0)	Poor (1)	Satisfactory (2)	Good (3)	Excellent (4)
<p>A response has not been provided.</p>	<p>The Qualifying Bidder’s planning and consenting strategy is deficient in one or more area(s) and lacks reliability.</p> <p>Features of a ‘Poor’ response may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Critical primary or secondary consents have not been identified • The relevant consenting regime(s) has/have not been identified, including the relevant consenting bodies • Key surveys, studies, assessments or documents which will be critical to securing consents have not been identified • No consideration is given to planning/consenting requirements post-submission of the application for primary consent(s) 	<p>The Qualifying Bidder’s planning and consenting strategy adequately addresses the key requirements for obtaining relevant consents but provides no evidence of how previous experience has informed the strategy. Certain secondary consents and/or post-submission requirements may not be identified.</p> <p>Features of a ‘Satisfactory’ response may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Critical primary and secondary consents have been identified, however, certain secondary consents may have been missed • The relevant consenting regime(s) has/have been identified, including the relevant consenting bodies • The environmental and community factors that will require assessment have been identified • Key surveys, studies, assessments and documents critical to securing consents have been identified at a high 	<p>The Qualifying Bidder’s planning and consenting strategy is clear and robust. There is evidence that it has been developed based on the Qualifying Bidder’s previous experience and that the strategy reliably sets out the process to securing all necessary consents.</p> <p>Features of a ‘Good’ response may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A thorough inventory is provided of all of the primary and secondary consents which will or may be required; where relevant, this includes an assessment of how likely it is that certain consents will be needed, if these are not necessarily required for every project similar to the Qualifying Bidder’s Preferred Solution • The strategy is supported by case studies, including of the Qualifying Bidder’s own experience, and has been developed to reduce risk based on lessons learned 	<p>‘Excellent’ responses are those which meet the evaluation criteria for a ‘Good’ response, but which also incorporate further added value, especially in helping to de-risk and/or expedite the Qualifying Project programme.</p> <p>Features of an ‘Excellent’ response may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Qualifying Bidder has demonstrated that they have identified other infrastructure developments in the planning system which could interact with the Qualifying Project and considered the risks and/or opportunities that these pose to consenting • The Qualifying Bidder proposes the use of innovative approach(es), including digital tools, which will de-risk and/or expedite the planning and consenting process in a measurable way

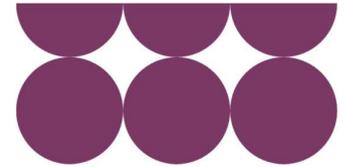


ITT Question 4.2				
Preliminary Works – planning and consenting				
Planning and consenting strategy				
No submission (0)	Poor (1)	Satisfactory (2)	Good (3)	Excellent (4)
		<p>level, however, information regarding these may be limited and/or certain activities which are typically required for projects of this nature may have been missed</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consideration is given to planning/consenting requirements post-submission of the application for primary consent(s) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The relevant consenting regime(s) has/have been identified, including the relevant consenting bodies The environmental and community factors that will require assessment have been identified; in addition, factors that the Qualifying Bidder intends to scope out of assessment (and which in doing so may help to de-risk or expedite the programme) have also been described, with sufficient justification The surveys, studies, assessments and documents likely to be required to obtain all of the primary and secondary consents for the Qualifying Project have been comprehensively identified and described The strategy includes a detailed approach for the stage following submission of the application for primary consent(s), including the potential for judicial review The planning and consenting strategy clearly interlinks with the 	



ITT Question 4.2				
Preliminary Works – planning and consenting				
Planning and consenting strategy				
No submission (0)	Poor (1)	Satisfactory (2)	Good (3)	Excellent (4)
			<p>Qualifying Bidder’s land rights strategy and other elements of their Preliminary Works and, in doing so, demonstrably reduces risk (for example of programme delays or of consents not being obtained)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The strategy includes details of how the Qualifying Bidder will manage and secure any necessary planning-related agreements with third parties • The strategy is clear, coherent and well-structured and is supported by figures, maps, charts, diagrams, etc, where relevant 	

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4.3. Consultation

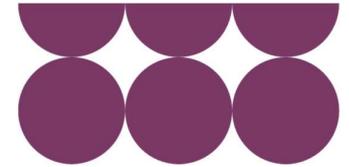
Qualifying Bidders are to set out their proposed approach to consultation with statutory and non-statutory stakeholders, including the public. This should include details of how consultee feedback will be recorded, how issues raised during consultation will be integrated into the decision-making process, and how changes or decisions made will be communicated back to stakeholders. The strategy should be designed to ensure that the consultation process is inclusive and representative of all relevant stakeholders, including under-represented groups.

Qualifying Bidders should make clear that they have considered and allowed for changes to be made to their Preferred Solution (as identified in their tender response) based on feedback they receive during consultation with stakeholders.

The page limit for Question 4.3 is five A4 pages, inclusive of all diagrams and/or other supporting information.

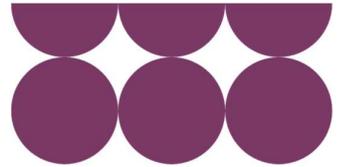
Evaluation criteria for Question 4.3. Consultation

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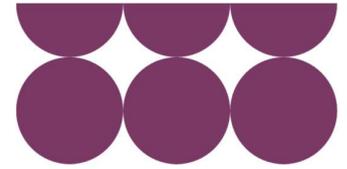
Public

ITT Question 4.3				
Preliminary works – planning and consenting				
Consultation				
No submission (0)	Poor (1)	Satisfactory (2)	Good (3)	Excellent (4)
<p>A response has not been provided.</p>	<p>The Qualifying Bidder's proposed approach to consultation is deficient in one or more area(s) and lacks reliability.</p> <p>Features of a 'Poor' response may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key consultees have not been identified • Key dates/milestones for consultation have not been identified or consultation events are proposed at inappropriate times • Methods for consultation with stakeholders are not adequately described • A suitable mechanism for addressing consultee feedback is not clearly described 	<p>The Qualifying Bidder's proposed approach to consultation is sufficient to meet regulatory and/or planning policy requirements.</p> <p>Features of a 'Satisfactory' response may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All key statutory stakeholders and some, but not necessarily all, relevant non-statutory stakeholders have been identified • Key dates/milestones for consultation have been identified and these are at appropriate times during the Qualifying Project programme • A generic method for consulting with statutory and non-statutory stakeholders and the public is described • A mechanism for recording and addressing consultee feedback is clearly described • It is clear that the Qualifying Bidder is allowing for changes to be made to their Preferred Solution based on feedback 	<p>The Qualifying Bidder's proposed approach to consultation is clear and robust. It is likely to exceed minimum regulatory and/or planning policy requirements and result in meaningful engagement with Qualifying Project stakeholders throughout the Preliminary Works phase.</p> <p>Features of a 'Good' response may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Specialist resource with demonstrable experience of public engagement is identified as being part of the Qualifying Bidder's team, with a clear remit to engage with stakeholders, including the public • Key dates/milestones for consultation have been identified and these are at appropriate times during the project programme; consultation will begin early in the Preliminary Works phase to facilitate feedback being incorporated into the design evolution of the Preferred Solution 	<p>'Excellent' responses are those which meet the evaluation criteria for a 'Good' response, but which also incorporate further added value, especially in helping to enhance consultation and, in so-doing, to de-risk and/or expedite the Qualifying Project programme.</p> <p>Features of an 'Excellent' response may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Linking with the Qualifying Bidder's risk assessment, specific risks introduced by individual consultees are identified and the approach to consultation with these stakeholders is tailored in such a way as to reduce these risks • A strategy for public relations management is provided, including for addressing the concerns of opposition groups (should they exist) • Key risks associated with consultation are identified and the Qualifying Bidder's approach has been developed to manage and lessen these



ITT Question 4.3				
Preliminary works – planning and consenting				
Consultation				
No submission (0)	Poor (1)	Satisfactory (2)	Good (3)	Excellent (4)
		<p>received during statutory and non-statutory consultation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A thorough inventory of all statutory and non-statutory stakeholders is provided • A detailed method for consulting with statutory and non-statutory stakeholders and the public is described • A robust approach to public consultation is proposed • The Qualifying Bidder's approach to consultation will clearly facilitate engagement with under-represented groups • The method for recording and addressing consultee feedback is clearly described alongside the Qualifying Bidder's proposed approach to determining if and how such feedback can be incorporated into the Qualifying Project design (and for communicating such decisions back to the relevant consultees) 	

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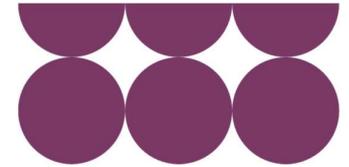
4.4. Community benefits and environmental enhancement

With reference to relevant legislation and planning policy, Qualifying Bidders are to set out their proposed approach to developing schemes for community benefits and environmental enhancement to be delivered by the Qualifying Project.

This question specifically relates to those long-term plans or measures that will be implemented on an enduring basis by the Qualifying Project. It is not asking about, for example, construction-phase mitigation measures. Avoidance, mitigation or compensation measures which may be required to minimise or ameliorate harms caused by the Qualifying Project would not be considered as delivering benefits or enhancement, unless they would demonstrably deliver improvements relative to the baseline conditions.

The page limit for Question 4.4 is four A4 pages, inclusive of all diagrams and/or other supporting information.

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Evaluation criteria for Question 4.4. Community benefits and environmental enhancement

ITT Question 4.4				
Preliminary Works – planning and consenting				
Community benefits and environmental enhancement				
No submission (0)	Poor (1)	Satisfactory (2)	Good (3)	Excellent (4)
<p>A response has not been provided.</p>	<p>The Qualifying Bidder has not provided a clear plan for delivering community benefits and/or environmental enhancement.</p> <p>Features of a 'Poor' response may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The drivers behind delivering community benefits and/or environmental enhancement have not been identified Proposals for providing community benefits and/or environmental enhancement are vague or unlikely to be sufficient to meet the minimum requirements of relevant drivers 	<p>The Qualifying Bidder has provided a high-level plan for delivering community benefits and/or environmental enhancement which is likely to meet the minimum requirements of relevant legislation and/or planning policy.</p> <p>Features of a 'Satisfactory' response may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The relevant drivers behind delivering community benefits and/or environmental enhancement have been identified Proposals for providing community benefits and/or environmental enhancement are generic and not necessarily specific to the Qualifying Bidder's Preferred Solution 	<p>The Qualifying Bidder has provided a detailed plan for delivering community benefits as well as environmental enhancement which will clearly meet the minimum requirements of relevant legislation and/or planning policy.</p> <p>Features of a 'Good' response may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The relevant drivers behind delivering community benefits and/or environmental enhancement have been identified and it is clear how the Qualifying Bidder will meet the requirements of each Proposals for providing community benefits and environmental enhancement are specific to the Qualifying Bidder's Preferred Solution There is evidence that the Qualifying Bidder's plan is based on their previous experience and lessons learned 	<p>'Excellent' responses are those which meet the evaluation criteria for a 'Good' response, but which demonstrably incorporate additional value for communities and/or the environment.</p> <p>Features of an 'Excellent' response may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commitments are made which go above and beyond the minimum requirements for community benefits and environmental enhancement specified by relevant drivers The plan proposes community wealth building, and the establishment of long-lasting benefits, schemes, partnerships and/or collaboration, in particular with local organisations The plan is designed to be effective for the long-term, during the operational phase of the Qualifying Project, and allows for monitoring and adaptation



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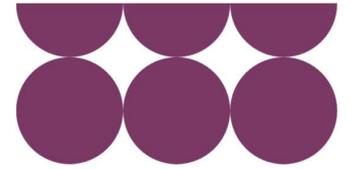
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Question 5. Preliminary Works – land [and seabed] rights

Question 5 pertains to the obtaining of the land [and seabed] rights required to enable the design, planning/consenting, construction and operation of the Qualifying Bidder's Preferred Solution.

5.1. Land [and seabed] rights resourcing

Qualifying Bidders are to identify how specialist resource with capability to secure land [and seabed] rights will be acquired. This may either be an in-house resource or an external organisation, and Qualifying Bidders should make this clear.



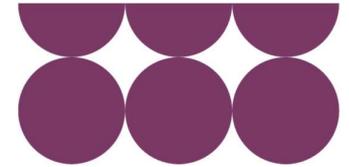
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The response should explain how the capability will be integrated within the wider Qualifying Bidder team and provide information on the depth of resource within the land [and seabed] rights team, including the number of team members and team structure.

Qualifying Bidders are required to confirm that the proposed land [and seabed] rights specialist capability will be responsible for securing all necessary land [and seabed] rights for the Qualifying Project.

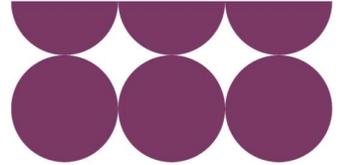
The page limit for Question 5.1 is four A4 pages, inclusive of all diagrams and/or other supporting information.

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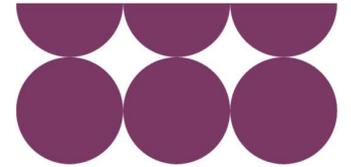
Evaluation criteria for Question 5.1. Land [and seabed] rights resourcing

ITT Question 5.1				
Preliminary Works – land [and seabed] rights				
Land [and seabed] rights resourcing				
No submission (0)	Poor (1)	Satisfactory (2)	Good (3)	Excellent (4)
<p>A response has not been provided.</p>	<p>The Qualifying Bidder has not demonstrated that an experienced land [and seabed] rights specialist resource has been, or will be, secured and/or that there is sufficient capacity within the land [and seabed] rights specialist team to deliver a project of the nature and scale of the Qualifying Project.</p> <p>Features of a 'Poor' response may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The response does not explain how the land [and seabed] rights specialist resource will be integrated within the wider Qualifying Bidder team No or limited information is provided on the depth of the land [and seabed] rights specialist team or the structure of the team The response does not clearly confirm that the land [and seabed] rights specialist resource will be responsible for the securing all the necessary land [and seabed] rights for the Qualifying Project 	<p>The Qualifying Bidder has demonstrated that they intend to procure a suitably experienced land [and seabed] rights specialist resource and this will be embedded within the wider Qualifying Bidder team. There is evidence that the depth of land [and seabed] rights specialist resource to be available will be sufficient to deliver a project of the nature and scale of the Qualifying Project.</p> <p>Features of a 'Satisfactory' response may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The response provides some detail on how the land [and seabed] rights specialist resource will be integrated within the wider Qualifying Bidder team, including a simple strategy for communication and collaboration with other teams The number of land [and seabed] rights specialist team members is identified and key roles are stated The response clearly confirms that the land [and seabed] rights 	<p>The Qualifying Bidder has already secured highly experienced land [and seabed] rights specialist resource which can demonstrate a track record of recently obtaining land [and seabed] rights for projects similar in nature and scale to the Qualifying Project. The land [and seabed] rights specialist team contains a depth of resource and will be fully integrated within the wider Qualifying Bidder team, reducing delivery risks.</p> <p>A 'Good' response will meet the evaluation criteria for a 'Satisfactory' response but will also contain other features, which may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A detailed strategy for collaboration is provided and this identifies the key teams with which the land [and seabed] rights specialist team will need to work most closely; communication methods and approaches to effective cross-disciplinary working are set out A nominated resource has been identified that will be responsible for securing and managing land 	<p>'Excellent' responses are those which meet the evaluation criteria for a 'Good' response, but which also incorporate further added value to the process of obtaining land [and seabed] rights in terms of the Qualifying Bidder's readiness to deliver the land [and seabed] rights process, and ability to manage risks. This may include supply chain management practices and contingencies.</p>



ITT Question 5.1				
Preliminary Works – land [and seabed] rights				
Land [and seabed] rights resourcing				
No submission (0)	Poor (1)	Satisfactory (2)	Good (3)	Excellent (4)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It is unclear who in the Qualifying Bidder's team will be responsible for managing the process of obtaining all land [and seabed] rights 	<p>specialist resource will be responsible for obtaining all the land [and seabed] rights needed for the Qualifying Project</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Where external resource is being acquired through the supply chain, it is clear how this resource will be procured, with indicative plans included within the programme 	<p>access rights during the Preliminary Works phase, at which time delays to field surveys can have adverse impacts on Qualifying Project programme</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> An organogram is provided, with key roles assigned and a clear chain of authority A skills/competency matrix is provided for the various roles within the land [and seabed] rights specialist resource Where external resource is being used, a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), or similar arrangement, is in place with the land [and seabed] rights specialist resource, confirming their readiness to commence and their availability to the Qualifying Bidder for the duration of the process of obtaining land [and seabed] rights 	

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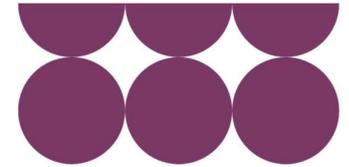
5.2. Land [and seabed] rights strategy

Qualifying Bidders are to provide a detailed strategy for acquiring the necessary land [and seabed] rights for the Qualifying Project. This should include details of how landowners/occupiers [and Crown Estate and/or Crown Estate Scotland] will be engaged with, methods for negotiation and acquisition, and the way in which disputes or conflicts that may arise will be managed and resolved.

Qualifying Bidders should make clear how their land [and seabed] rights strategy aligns with their strategy for planning and consenting and explain how these interconnected processes will be managed, with each influencing the other.

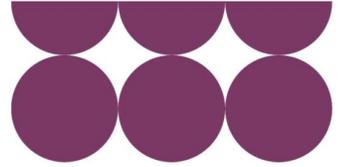
The page limit for Question 5.2 is five A4 pages, inclusive of all diagrams and/or other supporting information.

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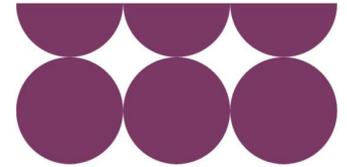
Evaluation criteria for Question 5.2. Land [and seabed] rights strategy

ITT Question 5.2				
Preliminary Works – land [and seabed] rights				
Land [and seabed] rights strategy				
No submission (0)	Poor (1)	Satisfactory (2)	Good (3)	Excellent (4)
<p>A response has not been provided.</p>	<p>The Qualifying Bidder's land [and seabed] rights strategy is deficient in one or more area(s) and lacks reliability.</p> <p>Features of a 'Poor' response may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Certain land rights which will be required are not identified by the Qualifying Bidder • A method for engaging and negotiating with landowners/occupiers [and Crown Estate and/or Crown Estate Scotland] is not provided or is lacking in detail • A method for conflict resolution is not described or is lacking in detail 	<p>The Qualifying Bidder's land [and seabed] rights strategy adequately addresses the key requirements for obtaining relevant land [and seabed] rights but provides no evidence of how previous experience has informed the strategy.</p> <p>Features of a 'Satisfactory' response may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All land rights which will be required at different stages of the Qualifying Project lifecycle are identified by the Qualifying Bidder • A method for engaging and negotiating with landowners/occupiers [and Crown Estate and/or Crown Estate Scotland] is provided • The way in which conflicts will be managed and resolved is clearly described • The approach to securing land [and seabed] rights in the event that negotiation fails is also described 	<p>The Qualifying Bidder's land [and seabed] rights strategy is clear and robust. There is evidence that it has been developed based on the Qualifying Bidder's previous experience and that the strategy reliably sets out the process to securing all land [and seabed] rights.</p> <p>Features of a 'Good' response may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Qualifying Bidder provides evidence of successfully securing land [and seabed] rights previously and explains how lessons learned have been incorporated into their land [and seabed] rights strategy • A detailed method for engaging and negotiating with landowners/occupiers [and Crown Estate and/or Crown Estate Scotland] is provided which accounts for key risks to the process • The way in which conflicts will be managed and resolved is clearly described 	<p>'Excellent' responses are those which meet the evaluation criteria for a 'Good' response, but which also incorporate further added value, especially in helping to de-risk and/or expedite the Qualifying Project programme.</p> <p>Features of an 'Excellent' response may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An initial exercise in identifying landowners/occupiers relevant to the Qualifying Bidder's Preferred Solution has been carried out and this has informed their land [and seabed] rights strategy • The Qualifying Bidder proposes the use of innovative approach(es), including digital tools, which will de-risk and/or expedite the land [and seabed] rights process in a measurable way



ITT Question 5.2				
Preliminary Works – land [and seabed] rights				
Land [and seabed] rights strategy				
No submission (0)	Poor (1)	Satisfactory (2)	Good (3)	Excellent (4)
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The approach to securing land rights in the event that negotiation fails is also described and this process has been designed to manage costs and minimise risks to Qualifying Project programme The land [and seabed] rights strategy clearly interlinks with the Qualifying Bidder’s planning and consenting strategy and other elements of their Preliminary Works and, in so-doing, demonstrably reduces risk 	

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Question 6. Construction

6.1. Construction phase resourcing and supply chain management

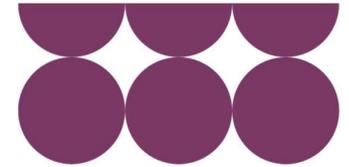
Details of the approach to resourcing the construction and commissioning works including, where required, developing a supply chain strategy, are to be provided. The approach should specifically distinguish between internal and external capabilities. An overview of key deliverables of the resourcing and supply chain strategy to ensure efficient delivery of construction activities should be provided.

The response should include:

- Details of the construction phase resourcing strategy
- Supply chain strategy and management
- Supply chain interface management
- Performance management

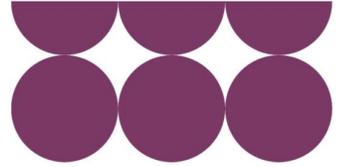
The page limit for Question 6.1 is six A4 pages, exclusive of all diagrams and/or other supporting information.

DRAFT - For comment



Evaluation criteria for Question 6.1. Construction phase resourcing and supply chain management

ITT Question 6.1				
Construction				
Construction phase resourcing and supply chain management				
No submission (0)	Poor (1)	Satisfactory (2)	Good (3)	Excellent (4)
A response has not been provided.	<p>Features of a 'Poor' response may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Resourcing plan is unclear, generic, or missing key construction or commissioning activities Limited explanation of roles, workforce planning, or competency requirements No meaningful supply chain strategy; minimal identification of key suppliers or long-lead items Fails to recognise or address supply chain constraints or risks No distinction between procurement activities and construction-phase delivery Does not set out how supplier interfaces will be managed No credible governance, contract management, or assurance approach No or limited consideration of how resourcing or supply chain 	<p>A basic but adequate response that meets minimum requirements, showing some understanding but lacking depth or completeness.</p> <p>Features of a 'Satisfactory' response may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides a general organisational structure and indicative resource levels, aligned to work packages or programme Recognises key supplier categories and broadly outlines procurement and contracting plans Acknowledgement of long-lead items or supply chain risks with strategies planned to de-risk the acquisition of constrained material, equipment, and resources Key construction interfaces identified with a basic plan for managing coordination between packages 	<p>A well-developed response with strong evidence, providing a high level of confidence in deliverability.</p> <p>Features of a 'Good' response may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides defined governance, escalation routes, and supplier management processes Sets out Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and quality assurance measures to monitor supplier performance Proposed contractual arrangements for construction packages promote coordination and cooperation Proposes cross-supplier governance models (for example, joint decision boards, integrated planning teams, shared interface KPIs and incentives) A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), or similar arrangement, is in place with key supply chain providers for key 	<p>Demonstrates a detailed and well-justified resourcing strategy covering all construction and commissioning phases.</p> <p>Features of an 'Excellent' response may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Includes mobilisation plans, competency assurance, and surge capacity arrangements Evidence-based approach using lessons learned from similar large-scale infrastructure projects Proactive development of the supply chain (for example, early engagement, frameworks, or partnership models in place with proposed supply chain partners) Demonstrates how behavioural frameworks or alliance-style working will manage conflict and drive shared accountability



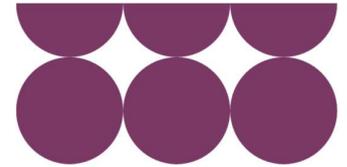
ITT Question 6.1

Construction

Construction phase resourcing and supply chain management

No submission (0)	Poor (1)	Satisfactory (2)	Good (3)	Excellent (4)
	<p>arrangements adapt as design evolves</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Missing or superficial treatment of supply chain or delivery risks		<p>materials, resource, plant, and equipment</p>	

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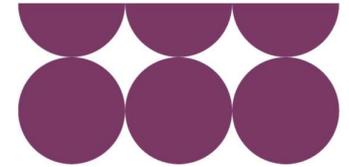
6.2. Construction Phase Plan

Qualifying Bidders are required to submit a Construction Phase Plan, outlining the key construction phase work packages and how they propose to undertake the construction elements of the Qualifying Project, including commissioning works. The response should explain how the construction proposals will remain adaptable as the design evolves during the Preliminary Works.

Outline Method Statements for the specific parts of the scope that the Qualifying Bidder has identified as being key elements of the construction works should also be provided.

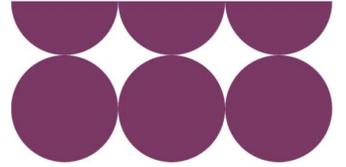
The page limit for Question 6.2 is 10 A4 pages, inclusive of all diagrams and/or other supporting information.

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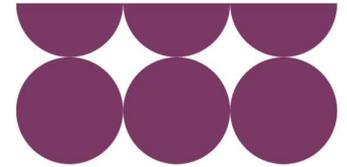
Evaluation criteria for Question 6.2. Construction Phase Plan

ITT Question 6.2				
Construction				
Construction Phase Plan				
No submission (0)	Poor (1)	Satisfactory (2)	Good (3)	Excellent (4)
<p>A response has not been provided.</p>	<p>The Qualifying Bidder's Construction Phase Plan is deficient in one or more area(s) and lacks reliability.</p> <p>Features of a 'Poor' response may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work packages miss key construction activities • Commissioning processes not in line with STCP19-4 • The approach to resourcing fails to consider key construction activities • There is no or limited consideration of supply chain issues or use of supply chain to facilitate efficient delivery of the construction activities 	<p>The Qualifying Bidder's Construction Phase Plan is realistic and provides confidence that construction and commissioning will be well-managed and can be completed safely, in accordance with the Qualifying Bidder's programme.</p> <p>Features of a 'Satisfactory' response may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A clear list of construction work packages has been identified covering the main elements of the construction and commissioning phases • There is evidence of adaptability in proposed construction methods allowing them to respond to evolving design • High-level commissioning processes have been provided and these accord with STCP 19-4 • A clear approach to resourcing the main construction activities, including via supply chain, has been provided 	<p>The Qualifying Bidder's Construction Phase Plan is clear and robust. There is evidence that it has been developed based on the Qualifying Bidder's previous experience and that it reliably describes, in detail, how all construction and commissioning activities will be delivered in a safe and efficient manner.</p> <p>Features of a 'Good' response may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All elements of the construction works have been identified and covered in the Construction Phase Plan • The Construction Phase Plan shows commitment to continuous improvement and innovation, and the benefits of these are clearly demonstrated within the response • Detailed commissioning processes have been provided, in line with STCP19-4 • A detailed description of the Qualifying Bidder's approach to managing supply chain risks, 	<p>'Excellent' responses are those which meet the evaluation criteria for a 'Good' response, but which also incorporate further added value or benefits, especially in helping to de-risk and/or expedite the Qualifying Project programme.</p> <p>Features of an 'Excellent' response may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Qualifying Bidder proposes the use of innovative approach(es) which will de-risk and/or expedite the construction and commissioning phases • The Qualifying Bidder has identified in their Construction Phase Plan where opportunities lie for their programme to be expedited and explains how they will seek to realise these • Provisions for resourcing all elements of the main construction works packages are already in place, including established contractual arrangements with external supply chain providers, where



ITT Question 6.2				
Construction				
Construction Phase Plan				
No submission (0)	Poor (1)	Satisfactory (2)	Good (3)	Excellent (4)
			and for using supply chain to manage risks, is provided	needed, demonstrating the Qualifying Bidder's commitment and readiness to deliver the construction and commissioning phases

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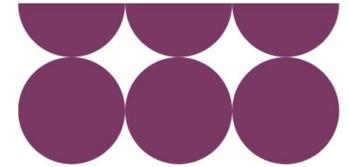
6.3. Health and safety, environment, and sustainability

Qualifying Bidders are to provide details of their approach to managing health and safety during construction, including senior leadership commitment to driving safe working practices. Sample risk assessments and method statements for high-risk activities relevant to the Qualifying Bidder's Construction Phase Plan should be provided. The ways in which health and safety performance will be monitored during the construction and commissioning phases should be described, in addition to how measures for improving (or maintaining) performance will be implemented.

Qualifying Bidders should explain how the Construction Phase Plan aligns with environmental and sustainability goals, including, for example, carbon reduction, pollution prevention and nature protection during the construction works. Qualifying Bidders should also detail how their proposed construction methods will manage disruption to local communities.

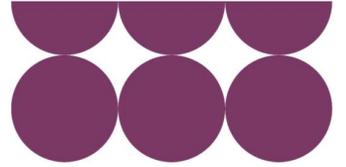
The page limit for Question 6.3 is three A4 pages. This does not include sample risk assessments or method statements provided in support of their response, which will not count towards the page limit.

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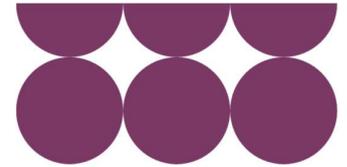
Evaluation criteria for Question 6.3. Health and safety, environment, and sustainability

ITT Question 6.3				
Construction				
Health and safety, environment, and sustainability				
No submission (0)	Poor (1)	Satisfactory (2)	Good (3)	Excellent (4)
<p>A response has not been provided.</p>	<p>The Qualifying Bidder's response does not demonstrate that health and safety, environment and/or sustainability issues will be adequately managed during construction and commissioning works.</p> <p>Features of a 'Poor' response may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of commitment to health and safety, environmental protection and/or sustainability management There is limited or no evidence that the Qualifying Bidder understands the risks associated with high voltage transmission infrastructure and/or incumbent TO's safety rules No consideration is given to minimising adverse impacts on local communities during construction works 	<p>The Qualifying Bidder's response shows a commitment to managing health and safety, environment and sustainability issues such that they will meet minimum regulatory requirements.</p> <p>Features of a 'Satisfactory' response may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is demonstrable commitment to health and safety from the senior management downwards, with reference to building safe working practices within the organisation's culture There is evidence that the Qualifying Bidder understands and acknowledges the risks associated with high voltage transmission infrastructure and the incumbent TO's safety rules, which will be relevant at interface points Strategies for environmental protection and sustainability management are described 	<p>The Qualifying Bidder's response demonstrates that health, safety, environment and sustainability will be core principles and that works will be carried out in such a way as to more than just meet minimum regulatory requirements.</p> <p>Features of a 'Good' response may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Health and safety policies have already been drafted for use within the Qualifying Bidder consortium Safety rules and policies are provided in line with best practice, especially when working with high voltage equipment Detailed descriptions of environmental protection, sustainability management and community impact mitigation measures are provided A basic draft construction environmental management plan in place, containing traffic management plan, and noise 	<p>An 'Excellent' response will meet the evaluation criteria for a 'Good' response but will also show that the Qualifying Bidder is committed to health, safety, well-being, environmental, sustainability and community initiatives which deliver benefits to their workforce, local people and/or the environment.</p> <p>Features of an 'Excellent' may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work sequencing to harness efficiency savings A detailed draft construction environmental management plan in place, containing traffic management plan, and noise management plan included which is bespoke to project



ITT Question 6.3				
Construction				
Health and safety, environment, and sustainability				
No submission (0)	Poor (1)	Satisfactory (2)	Good (3)	Excellent (4)
		<ul style="list-style-type: none">Measures suitable for managing community impacts during construction activities are identified	management plan included which is bespoke to project	

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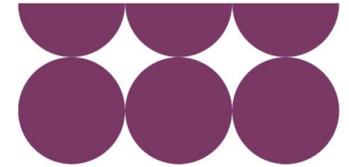
Question 7. Risk assessment and mitigation

Qualifying Bidders are to provide a risk assessment which clearly sets out the risks involved in the Preliminary Works, construction phase and operational phase of the Qualifying Project and how they intend to mitigate these. The following (non-exhaustive) list of broad types of risk should be considered in the risk assessment:

- Business continuity risks and knock-on effects from business continuity issues experienced by any Qualifying Bidder Group Member
- Consents being refused
- The Qualifying Project being challenged by judicial review
- Conditions applied to consents
- Failure to obtain land rights
- Land rights issues leading to Qualifying Project delays
- Productivity risks during construction
- Construction risks identified through desktop study and the Construction Phase Plan, especially where initial development has identified risks that are difficult to quantify (for example, the presence of risks has been noted but the exact location or quantum is difficult to determine)
- Supply chain risks and/or disruption, including delivery and logistics of components manufactured overseas
- Resource availability across the duration of the Preliminary, construction, and commissioning works
- Operational risks

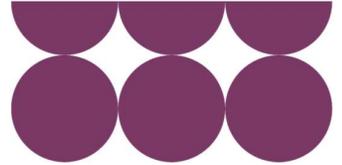
Qualifying Bidders should describe how identified risks, and the effectiveness of risk mitigation, will be monitored, reviewed and, where necessary, adjusted throughout the Qualifying Project lifecycle.

There is no page limit for the Qualifying Bidder's risk assessment. However, descriptive narrative supporting the risk assessment must be no longer than ten A4 pages.



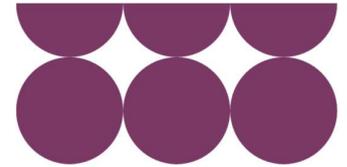
Evaluation criteria for Question 7. Risk assessment and mitigation

ITT Question 7				
Risk assessment and mitigation				
No submission (0)	Poor (1)	Satisfactory (2)	Good (3)	Excellent (4)
<p>A response has not been provided.</p>	<p>The Qualifying Bidder's risk assessment is high-level, misses key, readily identifiable risks and/or does not identify mitigation adequate to address those risks which are identified.</p> <p>Features of a 'Poor' response may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A description of the risk assessment method adopted is not provided, or the method provided is unclearly or inconsistently applied • Key risks which are readily foreseeable for a project of this nature are not included in the risk assessment • Mitigation measures are identified but these may not be allocated to specific risks, or there is a lack of certainty regarding the likely success of identified mitigation measures 	<p>The Qualifying Bidder's risk assessment identifies the key risks associated with the Preliminary Works, construction phase and operational phase, and describes, at high-level, mitigation measures which are likely to be successful in managing/reducing those risks.</p> <p>Features of a 'Satisfactory' response may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A high-level description of the risk assessment method is provided, and this is applied clearly and consistently • The identified risks are generic or high level and, where it would be beneficial to do so, do not include specific details • Mitigation measures are identified for each risk considered in the assessment, but these measures may be generic or high level 	<p>The Qualifying Bidder's risk assessment thoroughly identifies foreseeable risks to the project throughout the Preliminary Works, construction phase and operational phase. A robust approach to mitigation and contingency planning is described. There is evidence that the risk assessment is based on the Qualifying Bidder's previous experience and draws upon lessons learned.</p> <p>Features of a 'Good' response may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A detailed description of the risk assessment method is provided, and this is clearly and consistently applied • There is evidence that the risk assessment has been informed by the Qualifying Bidder's previous experience and has been developed to reduce risks based on lesson learned • The identified risks are specific to the Qualifying Bidder's Preferred Solution, and detailed analysis of those risks is provided 	<p>'Excellent' responses are those which meet the evaluation criteria for a 'Good' response, but which also incorporate further added value, especially where this adds certainty to the identified risks and their management.</p> <p>Features of an 'Excellent' response may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The risk assessment, wherever possible, includes quantitative information (for example, costs associated with the risk, duration of delays which may arise if the risk is realised) • As well as risks, the assessment identifies opportunities (for example to expedite Qualifying Project programme, reduce costs, etc) • The risk assessment considers the interconnectedness of risks and clearly identifies where the realisation of particular risks could increase the likelihood of other risks arising; measures to minimise and/or mitigate any instances of risk



ITT Question 7				
Risk assessment and mitigation				
No submission (0)	Poor (1)	Satisfactory (2)	Good (3)	Excellent (4)
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mitigation measures are identified for each risk considered in the assessment and these are described in detail such that there is confidence in the likelihood of their success As well as identifying foreseeable risks, the risk assessment allows for unforeseeable/unidentified risks and proposes a method for managing these as they become apparent during the Qualifying Project lifecycle A nominated resource is identified as being responsible for preparation and management of a risk register for the duration of the Qualifying Project lifecycle; the risk register will be reviewed regularly and risks and their associated mitigation adjusted as necessary 	<p>interconnectedness are identified</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Qualifying Bidder has identified and proposes to adopt innovative approaches, including the use of digital tools, to minimise risks or realise opportunities The Qualifying Bidder provides evidence of a robust system for managing and ensuring supply chain availability and flexibility, and for monitoring supplier performance and compliance; key suppliers may be named, with commitments made to their involvement in the Qualifying Project

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Question 8. Programme

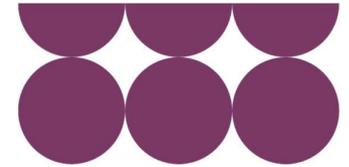
Qualifying Bidders are required to submit a programme for the Preliminary Works and construction (including commissioning) phases of the Qualifying Project, demonstrating how they will meet the required in-service date (as stated in the Tendered Scope of Works). The programme should be based on the Qualifying Bidder's strategies for planning and consenting, land rights and supply chain management, as well as their Construction Phase Plan.

The programme is to be accompanied by a detailed commentary explaining how it has been developed with cognisance of the risks identified in the Qualifying Bidder's risk assessment, with a consolidated list of the assumptions made during its development. It should highlight specific risks that could potentially impact the programme and discuss how these risks might lead to adjustments to the proposed timeline and/or approach.

The programme is to be provided in both PDF and Microsoft Projects formats.

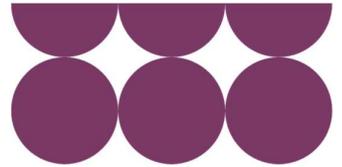
There is no page limit for the programme submitted by Qualifying Bidders. However, the accompanying narrative must not exceed ten A4 pages.

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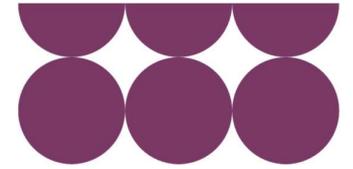


Evaluation criteria for Question 8. Programme

ITT Question 8				
Programme				
No submission (0)	Poor (1)	Satisfactory (2)	Good (3)	Excellent (4)
<p>A response has not been provided.</p>	<p>The Qualifying Bidder's programme is deemed to be unreliable for one or more reasons and/or the programme is supported by inadequate commentary to enable confidence in it.</p> <p>Features of a 'Poor' response may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The programme is insufficiently detailed and it is not possible to have confidence in the timescales set out Key elements of the Preliminary Works and/or construction phases are missed, meaning that the programme is unrealistic There is no description of the assumptions made in developing the programme, or some of the key assumptions made are unrealistic There is no contingency in the programme or allowance for the risks identified in the Qualifying Bidder's risk assessment 	<p>The Qualifying Bidder's programme is clear and understandable and is supported by a high-level narrative describing the assumptions made in its development. Those assumptions are considered to be realistic, such that there is a fair degree of confidence in the reliability of the programme.</p> <p>Features of a 'Satisfactory' response may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The programme contains a reasonable level of detail, breaking down different elements of the Preliminary Works and construction phases in order to provide confidence in the timescales set out There are no obvious gaps or key elements of the Preliminary Works or construction phases absent from the programme Interdependencies between various elements of the Qualifying Project development process have been identified and accounted for in the programme 	<p>The Qualifying Bidder has provided a detailed programme with line items for all of the activities involved in the Preliminary Works and construction phases. There is a high degree of confidence in the reliability of the programme. There is evidence that the programme is based on the Qualifying Bidder's previous experience and draws upon lessons learned.</p> <p>Features of a 'Good' response may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The programme is very detailed, with timelines set for all of the activities involved in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Qualifying Project design The planning and consenting process (including, for example, the surveys and studies identified as being necessary in the Qualifying Bidder's planning and consenting strategy) Securing land rights 	<p>'Excellent' responses are those which meet the evaluation criteria for a 'Good' response, but which also incorporate flexibility, contingency and allow for the identification and realisation of opportunities to expedite the Qualifying Project programme.</p> <p>Features of an 'Excellent' response may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The narrative accompanying the programme clearly explains how risks have influenced the programme and, where they haven't been incorporated, how the programme would change if they were realised The narrative accompanying the programme explains where flexibility and contingency for identified risks have been incorporated into the timelines set out; the narrative explains the consequences for the programme if such risks are not realised Opportunities to expedite the programme are identified and the narrative explains how the



ITT Question 8				
Programme				
No submission (0)	Poor (1)	Satisfactory (2)	Good (3)	Excellent (4)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The programme is unclear or difficult to interpret 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The narrative accompanying the programme is high-level but describes the realistic assumptions made in its development The programme may not allow for the possibility of judicial review 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Construction and commissioning There is evidence that the programme has been developed based on the Qualifying Bidder's previous experience and lessons learned Key milestones are clearly identified in the programme, including (but not necessarily limited to being) in relation to consultation points and risk resolutions The narrative accompanying the programme is detailed and cross-refers to the Qualifying Bidder's Preliminary Works strategies, Construction Phase Plan, and risk assessment A nominated resource is identified as being responsible for monitoring and updating the programme throughout the Qualifying Project lifecycle The Qualifying Project programme clearly allows for judicial review 	<p>programme would change should these be realised</p>



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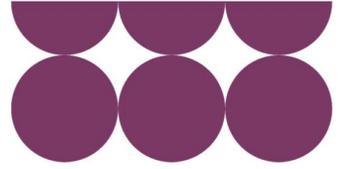
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Question 9. Operation and maintenance

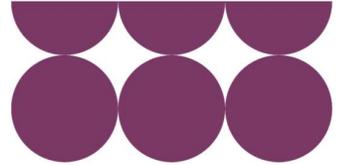
9.1. Operational phase resourcing and supply chain management

The Qualifying Bidder's approach to resourcing operational activities should be set out, including, where required, developing a supply chain strategy. The approach should specifically distinguish between internal and external capabilities. If external resources are to be used, the proposed contractual arrangements should be included.

The page limit for Question 9.1 is four A4 pages, inclusive of all diagrams and/or other supporting information.

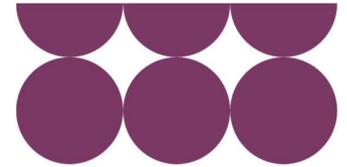


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Evaluation criteria for Question 9.1. Operations resource and supply chain

ITT Question 9.1				
Operation and maintenance				
Operations resource and supply chain				
No submission (0)	Poor (1)	Satisfactory (2)	Good (3)	Excellent (4)
<p>A response has not been provided.</p>	<p>The Qualifying Bidder’s proposed approach to operations resource and supply chain is deficient and/or there is inadequate supporting evidence to enable confidence in it.</p> <p>Features of a ‘Poor’ response may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Resourcing arrangements are unclear No clear distinction between internal vs external delivery capability Supply chain risks are not considered or are insufficiently addressed Contractual arrangements for external suppliers are not described 	<p>The Qualifying Bidder’s proposed approach to operations resource and supply chain is realistic and their response provides confidence that the main operations resource and supply chain strategies will be well-managed and carried out safely.</p> <p>Features of a ‘Satisfactory’ response may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A clear outline of internal and external resourcing arrangements Some indication of how operational capability will be ensured A basic supply chain plan addressing key operational needs and risks has been developed An outline of contractual or procurement arrangements for third-party support 	<p>The Qualifying Bidder’s proposed approach to operations resource and supply chain is clear and robust. There is evidence that it has been developed based on the Qualifying Bidder’s previous experience and that it reliably describes, in detail, how operations resource and supply chain strategies will be delivered in a safe and efficient manner.</p> <p>Features of a ‘Good’ response may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Detailed operational resourcing structures, staffing profiles, and competency frameworks A well-developed supply chain strategy addressing risk, resilience, and scalability Evidence of experience in developing similar supply chains and resourcing provided A detailed description of the Qualifying Bidder’s approach to managing supply chain risks, and for using supply chain to manage risks, is provided 	<p>‘Excellent’ responses are those which meet the evaluation criteria for a ‘Good’ response, but which also incorporate further added value or benefits, which may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Innovative supply chain or workforce models that enhance resilience or reduce downtime. Evidence of strategic long-term partnerships delivering measurable operational benefits Advanced workforce planning tools or supply chain digitalisation initiatives Established procurement frameworks or draft contracts for external operational support



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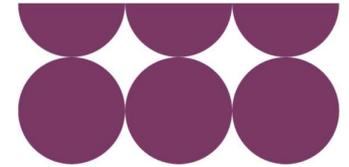
9.2. Asset management approach

Qualifying Bidders are to provide details of their approach to asset management, specifically including:

- Approach to asset inspection and maintenance (including predictive maintenance), repair, inspection, and condition monitoring. This should include planned and unplanned asset maintenance and proposed asset replacement strategy
- Approach to spares holdings, procurement, and management (for both strategic and operational spares)
- The advantages of this particular approach to asset management and how it would be implemented given uncertainty associated with the degree of development of the Qualifying Bidder's Preferred Solution at the tender stage

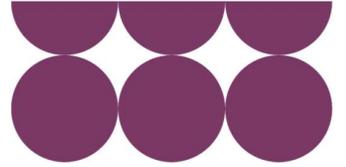
The page limit for Question 9.2 is four A4 pages, inclusive of all diagrams and/or other supporting information.

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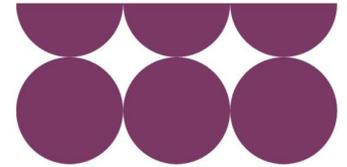
Evaluation criteria for Question 9.2. Asset management approach

ITT Question 9.2				
Operation and maintenance				
Asset management approach				
No submission (0)	Poor (1)	Satisfactory (2)	Good (3)	Excellent (4)
<p>A response has not been provided.</p>	<p>The Qualifying Bidder's proposed approach to asset management is deficient and/or there is inadequate supporting evidence to enable confidence in it.</p> <p>Features of a 'Poor' response may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The asset management approach is described only at a high level; a plan is provided but systems and processes have not yet been set up and implemented Certain key asset maintenance requirements have not been identified or described in the Qualifying Bidder's proposed approach A high-level description of the approach and requirement for spares is provided but with no clear indication of how these will be procured or be made available 	<p>The Qualifying Bidder's proposed approach to asset management is realistic and their response provides confidence that the main asset management activities will be well-managed and carried out safely.</p> <p>Features of a 'Satisfactory' response may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A high-level asset management strategy containing some details provided; a plan with relevant systems and processes is included All key asset maintenance requirements have been considered and described A high-level description of the approach and requirement for spares is provided, with some indication of how these will be procured and made available 	<p>The Qualifying Bidder's proposed approach to asset management is clear and robust. There is evidence that it has been developed based on the Qualifying Bidder's previous experience and that it reliably describes, in detail, how asset management activities will be delivered in a safe and efficient manner.</p> <p>Features of a 'Good' response may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A detailed and robust asset management strategy is provided; a plan with relevant systems and processes is included All key asset maintenance requirements have been considered and described, including timelines, contingencies and recovery works A detailed description of the approach and requirement for spares is provided, and 	<p>'Excellent' responses are those which meet the evaluation criteria for a 'Good' response, but which also incorporate further added value or benefits, especially in helping to maximise operational efficiency and reducing the risk of delivery delay.</p>



ITT Question 9.2				
Operation and maintenance				
Asset management approach				
No submission (0)	Poor (1)	Satisfactory (2)	Good (3)	Excellent (4)
			procurement frameworks or drafts are in place	

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Public

9.3. Operational availability and planning for major failure events

Qualifying Bidders are to provide details of their proposed approach to operational control and 24/7 control room monitoring, including:

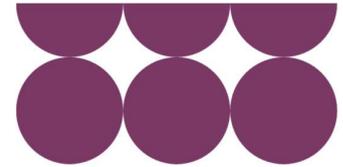
- Approach to outage coordination and a management strategy to achieve the minimum target availability of 98%, including the typical frequency and duration of outages throughout the service lifetime
- Approach to optimisation of operational performance during restoration
- Approach to the provision of apparatus and tools required in relation to system restoration and monitoring, including operational telephony and real-time datalink management

Qualifying Bidders should set out their control centre arrangements, describing how they will ensure secure, reliable and efficient system operation in compliance with NESO and industry standards. They should explain how the control centre operational model will be maintained and enhanced so as to remain continuously aligned with evolving system needs, regulatory requirements, and technological advancements, including in digitisation and automation.

Qualifying Bidders are also to describe their proposed approach to mitigating the risk of major failure events (for example, unforeseen weather-related hazards such as flood, storm and earthquake, and other hazards such as pandemic, nuclear pollution, war, etc) which could affect the Qualifying Project at different stages. The response should explain in detail how such events would be responded to in order to ensure that the asset(s) is/are returned to normal operations as quickly as possible.

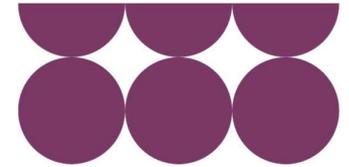
The response should explain how the Qualifying Bidder will implement and manage a plan to remediate any asset faults and/or failures which might occur. Qualifying Bidders should explain how this plan will be maintained to ensure that it remains continuously up to date to include current industry knowledge, experience, and standards.

The page limit for Question 9.3 is six A4 pages, inclusive of all diagrams and/or other supporting information.

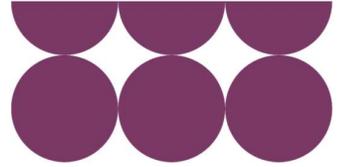


Evaluation criteria for Question 9.3. Operational availability and planning for major failure events

ITT Question 9.3				
Operation and maintenance				
Operational availability and planning for major failure events				
No submission (0)	Poor (1)	Satisfactory (2)	Good (3)	Excellent (4)
<p>A response has not been provided.</p>	<p>The Qualifying Bidder’s proposed approach to operational control and maintaining availability, as well as mitigating the risk of major failure events and to dealing with such events, is deficient and/or there is inadequate supporting evidence to have confidence in it.</p> <p>Features of a ‘Poor’ response may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The response does not clearly describe the approach to outage coordination, operational performance, and system restoration and monitoring • The response does not include any supporting evidence • The response fails to address major failure scenarios or provide contingency measures • The response lacks evidence of resources, spares, or mobilisation capability • There is no reference to STCP 06-1 or relevant NESO procedures 	<p>The Qualifying Bidder’s proposed approach to operational control and maintaining availability, as well as mitigating the risk of major failure events and to dealing with such events, is realistic and their response provides confidence that the operational availability will be maintained.</p> <p>Features of a ‘Satisfactory’ response may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A basic 24/7 control room setup with standard monitoring tools is proposed • The approach allows for outage coordination • The response provides operational data communications approaches • There is high-level assessment of risks. • The response refers to (and demonstrates the understanding of) the requirements of the STC, and in particular STCP04-2, 	<p>The Qualifying Bidder’s proposed approach to operational control and maintaining availability, as well as mitigating the risk of major failure events and to dealing with such events, is clear and robust. There is evidence that it has been developed based on the Qualifying Bidder’s previous experience and that it reliably describes, in detail, how operational availability will be maintained.</p> <p>Features of a ‘Good’ response may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear 24/7 control centre arrangements with defined roles and reporting systems are proposed • An outage management strategy is given, with details including proactive scheduling and risk mitigation • The response includes a detailed approach to real-time data exchange and/or secure telephony integrated for restoration support 	<p>‘Excellent’ responses are those which meet the evaluation criteria for a ‘Good’ response, but which also incorporate further added value or benefits, especially in helping to maximise operational availability, collaborating with the Electricity National Control Centre (ENCC), in accelerating recovery from outages, and mitigating the risk of major failure events as well as to dealing with such events.</p> <p>Features of an ‘Excellent’ response may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An advanced control centre with automation and predictive analytics for outages is proposed • The Qualifying Bidder proposes the use of innovative approach(es) to maximise operational availability, reduce risks of major failure events, or accelerate recovery from outage (for example, digital twins for system modelling, AI-driven tools for dynamic optimisation strategies, manned aerial inspections and robotic repair



ITT Question 9.3				
Operation and maintenance				
Operational availability and planning for major failure events				
No submission (0)	Poor (1)	Satisfactory (2)	Good (3)	Excellent (4)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No plan is given for updating the approach or alignment with evolving standards 	<p>STCP04-5, STCP 06-1, STCP 06-2, and STCP 06-3;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The response provides a basic plan covering major failure events with essential steps The response identifies key resources and spares 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Limited explanation of future enhancement potential, including digitisation and automation. The response refers to (and demonstrates the understanding of) the requirements of the STC, and in particular STCP04-2, STCP04-5, STCP 06-1, STCP 06-2, and STCP 06-3; supporting evidence, including from previous experience is given The response details what measures will be in place to bring asset(s) back to service following a major failure event, including access to necessary equipment and resources to (for example, the provision of temporary towers, pre-arranged contracts with specialist repair teams and logistics providers to ensure mobilisation within defined timeframes, etc) The response includes a plan for periodic review and update of the approach, aligned with regulatory changes 	<p>systems) and these provide demonstrable benefits</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A back-up strategy for real-time data exchange system and cyber-secure telephony for restoration The response provides detail on how the impact and risk of major failure events (both asset and system) will be mitigated (for example, digital monitoring and predictive analytics to identify early signs of asset stress and prevent failures, pre-positioned modular backup generation units during prolonged outages, collaborative agreements/plans with neighbouring utilities for mutual aid and resource sharing, etc) With regards to system failure, the response maintains alignment with the requirements of STCP 06-1, with strong supporting evidence provided A continuous improvement approach to managing risks associated with major failure



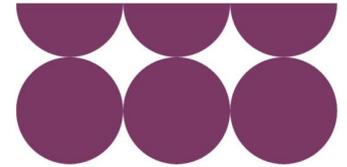
ITT Question 9.3

Operation and maintenance

Operational availability and planning for major failure events

No submission (0)	Poor (1)	Satisfactory (2)	Good (3)	Excellent (4)
				events, with measurable performance metrics

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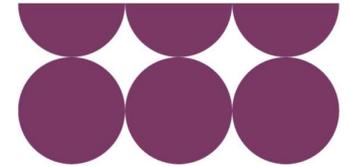
9.4. Operability

Qualifying Bidders are to describe their proposed strategy for ensuring the operability of the transmission asset(s), and how they will maintain secure, reliable, and efficient system operation under normal and contingency conditions. The response should explain how the Qualifying Bidder will implement and manage operability measures including voltage control, fault ride-through, reactive power capability, and coordination with NESO's operational requirements.

Explain how the proposed operability strategy will be maintained to remain aligned with evolving system needs, regulatory obligations, and industry standards, including compliance with the STC, Grid Code, SQSS, CUSC, and relevant standards.

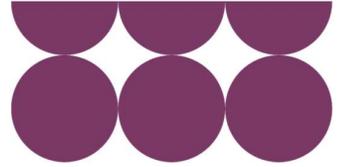
The page limit for Question 9.4 is four A4 pages, inclusive of all diagrams and/or other supporting information.

DRAFT - For comment



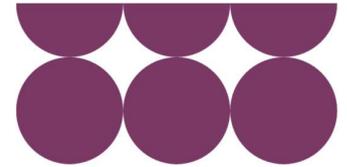
Evaluation criteria for Question 9.4. Operability

ITT Question 9.4				
Operation and maintenance				
Operability				
No submission (0)	Poor (1)	Satisfactory (2)	Good (3)	Excellent (4)
<p>A response has not been provided.</p>	<p>The Qualifying Bidder’s proposed method for ensuring asset operability is deficient and/or there is inadequate supporting evidence to have confidence in it.</p> <p>Features of a ‘Poor’ response may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is no clear operability strategy; vague references are made to system reliability • Fails to address voltage control, fault ride-through and/or reactive power capability • There is no evidence of compliance with STC, Grid Code, SQSS, CUSC or other related standards • It lacks contingency planning for contingency conditions • No plan is given for updating the approach or alignment with evolving standards 	<p>The Qualifying Bidder’s proposed method for ensuring asset operability is realistic and their response provides confidence that operability will be maintained.</p> <p>Features of a ‘Satisfactory’ response may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A basic operability plan covering normal conditions and some contingency measures • High-level voltage control and fault ride-through plans. • Stated compliance with STC, Grid Code, SQSS, CUSC or other related standards. 	<p>The Qualifying Bidder’s proposed method for ensuring asset operability is clear and robust. There is evidence that it has been developed based on the Qualifying Bidder’s previous experience and that it reliably describes, in detail, how operability will be maintained.</p> <p>Features of a ‘Good’ response may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A comprehensive operability strategy addressing normal and contingency conditions • Detailed measures for voltage control, reactive power, and fault ride-through • Clear compliance with STC, Grid Code, SQSS, and CUSC, supported by evidence • Demonstrated coordination with NESO operational requirements • A plan for periodic review and update of the approach, aligned with regulatory changes 	<p>‘Excellent’ responses are those which meet the evaluation criteria for a ‘Good’ response, but which also incorporate further added value or benefits, especially in enhancing the system’s reliability, stability, and resilience.</p> <p>Features of an ‘Excellent’ response may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An advanced strategy to proactively address potential future operability challenges across adequacy, within-day flexibility, frequency, stability, thermal constraints, voltage, and restoration (for example, high-fidelity stability analysis tools such as electromagnetic transient (EMT) simulations) • Detailed contingency planning for contingency conditions and rapid restoration • Integration of digital technologies (for example, automation, predictive analytics) to enhance operability



ITT Question 9.4				
Operation and maintenance				
Operability				
No submission (0)	Poor (1)	Satisfactory (2)	Good (3)	Excellent (4)
				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full compliance with UK codes (for example, STC, Grid Code, SQSS, CUSC, etc.) and alignment with ENTSO-E and IEC standards, etc • A continuous improvement approach to system operability with measurable performance metrics

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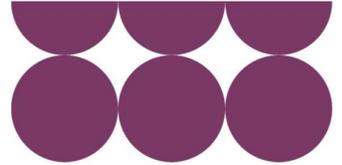
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9.5. Physical and cyber security

Qualifying Bidders are to describe their proposed approach to mitigating the risk of, and responding to, physical security and cyber security threats to the transmission asset(s). They are to describe in detail how they would ensure that the asset(s) remain protected and operational under such circumstances, and remain secure and resilient against unauthorised access, data breaches, or system compromise. The response should explain how the Qualifying Bidder would implement and manage their physical and cyber security plan to prevent, detect, and respond to unauthorised access, vandalism, cyber incidents, or other security breaches. Qualifying Bidders should explain how their plan will be maintained to ensure that it remains continuously up to date, incorporating current industry standards, threat intelligence, and lessons learned from previous incidents.

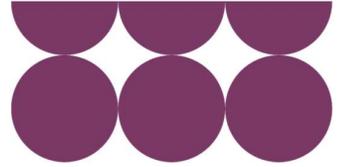
The page limit for Question 9.5 is three A4 pages, inclusive of all diagrams and/or other supporting information.

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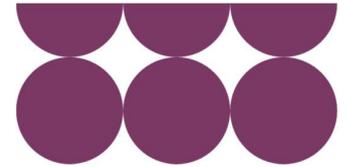
Evaluation criteria for Question 9.5. Physical and cyber security

ITT Question 9.5				
Operation and maintenance				
Physical and cyber security				
No submission (0)	Poor (1)	Satisfactory (2)	Good (3)	Excellent (4)
<p>A response has not been provided.</p>	<p>The Qualifying Bidder’s proposed approach to mitigating the risk of physical and cyber security breaches, and to dealing with such events were they to arise, is deficient and/or there is inadequate supporting evidence to have confidence in it.</p> <p>Features of a ‘Poor’ response may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is no clear plan or strategy provided • The response does not address prevention, detection, or response to physical asset threats and cyber threats • The response provides no evidence of resources or capability to deal with physical and cyber security threats • There is no reference to relevant legislation and standards • No plan is given for updating the approach or alignment with evolving standards 	<p>The Qualifying Bidder’s proposed approach to mitigating the risk of physical and cyber security breaches, and to dealing with such events were they to arise, is realistic and their response provides confidence that risks will be managed, and remedial actions taken to address physical security and cyber security breaches.</p> <p>Features of a ‘Satisfactory’ response may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The response outlines a basic physical and cyber security plan with standard security measures • The response includes measures for access control, basic threat detection and monitoring. • The response identifies key resources • Demonstrated capability to respond to physical security and cyber security threats • The response refers to the requirements of relevant legislation and standards and demonstrates that the Qualifying 	<p>The Qualifying Bidder’s proposed approach to mitigating the risk of physical and cyber security breaches, and to dealing with such events were they to arise, is clear and robust. There is evidence that it has been developed based on the Qualifying Bidder’s previous experience and that it reliably describes, in detail, how risks will be continuously evaluated and managed accordingly, and that remedial actions will lead to swift resolution of physical security and cyber security breaches.</p> <p>Features of a ‘Good’ response may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The response presents a detailed plan covering prevention, detection, and response • The response explains procedures for incident response, escalation and recovery • Evidence is given of resource availability and training for security events • Demonstrated alignment with relevant legislation and 	<p>‘Excellent’ responses are those which meet the evaluation criteria for a ‘Good’ response, but which also incorporate further added value or benefits, especially in physical asset security breach risk assessment and mitigation, and reducing cyber security risks.</p> <p>Features of an ‘Excellent’ response may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Qualifying Bidder proposes the use of innovative and/or advanced approach(es) (for example, AI-based or real-time monitoring, data-driven or predictive analytics, digital twin systems, etc) and these provide demonstrable benefits • Proactive threat modelling and risk mitigation approaches • A continuous improvement approach to physical and cyber security, with measurable performance metrics



ITT Question 9.5				
Operation and maintenance				
Physical and cyber security				
No submission (0)	Poor (1)	Satisfactory (2)	Good (3)	Excellent (4)
		Bidder will adhere to relevant legislation and standards	standards, with supporting evidence <ul style="list-style-type: none">A plan for periodic review and update of the approach, aligned with regulatory changes	

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Question 10. Approach to pricing

Qualifying Bidder's responses will be assessed based on the clarity, robustness, coherence and realism of the costing methodology, evidence, long-term credibility, and Post-Preliminary Works Cost Assessment (PPWCA) risk management, rather than absolute cost values.

10.1. Pricing methodology

Qualifying Bidders are required to provide a clear, evidence-based costing methodology covering all capex and opex elements over the full revenue period. The response must explain the assumptions, data sources and methods used to calculate costs for every cost element on the Tender Revenue Stream (TRS) sheet and demonstrate how pricing accounts for uncertainties inherent in early-model competitive tenders.

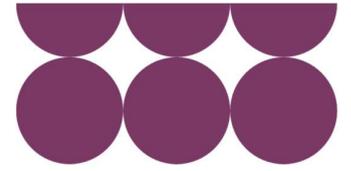
Qualifying Bidders are to set out the assumptions underlying their pricing, giving a detailed breakdown of all cost components, including (but not necessarily limited to) materials, labour, equipment, and subcontractor costs. Bidders should explain what methodologies have been used to determine long-term cost forecasts over the lifetime of the asset, including Major refurbishment and replacement cycles.

Consideration should also be given to land acquisition costs, making clear the assumptions made regarding the price of land rights and any allowances made for commercial agreements for land acquisition above market rates. Further, Qualifying Bidders are also required to set out their pricing assumptions and allowances for works to discharge conditions attached to any consent(s) and to address any legal challenges raised during the Preliminary Works phase.

Consideration is to be given to operational costs, including operations and maintenance, as well as satisfying the operational obligations of the NESO codes.

Qualifying Bidders must:

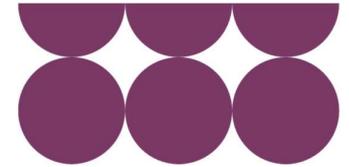
- Complete the Cost Input Template (CIT)
- Provide commentary linking the methodology to the CIT values, including clear statement of what is included/excluded in each category to avoid double counting
- Clearly identify indices uses, assumptions, exclusions, inclusions, and constraints, specifying why these were chosen.



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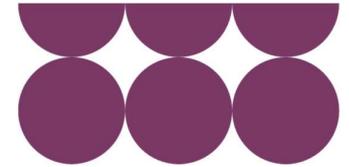
The page limit for Question 10.1 is ten A4 pages.

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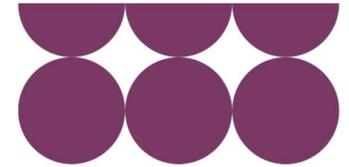


Evaluation criteria for Question 10.1. Pricing methodology

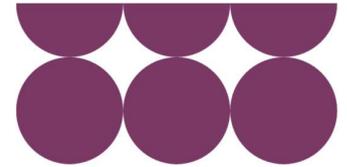
ITT Question 10.1				
Approach to pricing – pricing methodology				
No submission (0)	Poor (1)	Satisfactory (2)	Good (3)	Excellent (4)
<p>A response has not been provided.</p>	<p>The pricing methodology is incomplete, unclear or unreliable. The response inadequately addresses the question and/or includes inadequate supporting evidence.</p> <p>The Cost Input Template is partially completed or missing.</p> <p>Features of a 'Poor' response may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Costs are estimated based on generic assumptions, or are capacity-factored or analogy-based with no justification No market assessment/evaluation or supplier engagement has been carried out to inform pricing There are no estimates of labour hours or productivity assumptions There is no clear strategy for construction and installation packaging and/or scope boundaries are unclear There is no breakdown of equipment, facilities, or logistics costs and construction support is 	<p>The costing approach meets minimum requirements and provides a workable foundation.</p> <p>The Cost Input Template is completed with reasonable assumptions, though justification is limited.</p> <p>Features of a 'Satisfactory' response may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Major cost assumptions, inclusions/exclusions are provided, with a semi-detailed estimating approach and suitable work breakdown structure Preliminary market assessment/evaluation and supplier engagement has been carried out to inform pricing Some reference is made to labour agreements or labour hours on comparable projects, and basic productivity assumptions are made based on market surveys or benchmarks Indicative pricing or benchmarks used for transformers, 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The costing approach is clear, comprehensive and supported by robust and relevant evidence. The Cost Input Template is complete, internally consistent and clearly justified. Features of a 'Good' response may include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> All key cost assumptions, inclusions, exclusions and qualifications are fully stated and there is a clear work breakdown structure Market evaluation/assessment has been carried out and there is a clear understanding and/or cost strategy for securing labour, materials etc Productivity assumptions are study-based or informed by union/contractor input Supplier engagement for critical equipment (transformers, GIS, cables) has been carried out and indicative quotes or market pricing for major items are given 	<p>'Excellent' responses are those which meet the evaluation criteria for a 'Good' response, but which also incorporate significant added value, evidence depth and modelling maturity.</p> <p>The completed Cost Input Template demonstrates exceptional coherence and diligence.</p> <p>Features of an 'Excellent' response may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Costs are based on independently validated benchmarks/studies, verified union/contractor data, supplier engagement (with recent quotes) and in-depth market sounding/engagement The Qualifying Bidder provides evidence of reserved manufacturing capacity or framework agreements for critical long-lead equipment Labour costs are based on scenario-tested labour models and productivity curves by work package



ITT Question 10.1				
Approach to pricing – pricing methodology				
No submission (0)	Poor (1)	Satisfactory (2)	Good (3)	Excellent (4)
	<p>treated as percentage with no detail</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project delivery costs are treated as a percentage and/or there is no breakdown of advisor vs indirect costs Land acquisition costs are not addressed, or there is no allowance for compulsory purchase order (CPO) costs vs costs achieved by commercial arrangements Consent and legal costs are not addressed or inadequately covered NESO code costs are not addressed, or no basis is provided Escalation is only 'factored into the base cost' with no rate, duration or method Costs are assumed not to change over time, with no explanation Expected cost changes are not justified Any assumptions made contradict stated asset life or 	<p>switchgear, cables and other major assets</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A basic construction and installation packaging strategy is defined, with reasonable scope definition though boundaries may lack detail A preliminary approach to equipment rental, temporary facilities, and logistics is provided, with rough cost allowances with some rationale Advisor costs are estimated using preliminary hours at market rates or early quotes; indirect costs included as percentage but with rationale (e.g. historical norm) Allowance is made for most likely land costs across CPO and commercial arrangements, including some allowances for expediting land agreements Costs have been allowed for consenting and legal support, with clear explanation and basis Costs have been allowed for adherence to NESO codes and for operation and maintenance (including control centre 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A well-developed packaging strategy with clear scope boundaries is provided, with a clear definition of what's included in each package (materials, labour, embedded logistics) Construction support costs are based on detailed rental-rate study for equipment, evaluation of temporary facilities based on checklists and benchmarks, and a defined logistics strategy which considers transport modes and distances Project delivery costs are based on third-party hour estimates or verified fee structures for advisors (financial, legal, technical, insurance, tax); indirect costs are evidenced through historical benchmarks or preliminary detailed evaluation The land acquisition strategy considers both voluntary negotiation and CPO routes, with credible cost assumptions; there are clear allowances for above-market rates and a realistic assessment of opportunities to expedite the securing of land rights 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Construction support costs are based on comprehensive equipment modelling with contractor quotes and utilisation profiles, optimisation of temporary facilities based on modularisation or site layout, and a supply chain-integrated logistics model with scenario-tested routes and optimisation Project delivery costs are based on detailed fee models with verified scope for all advisor categories; activity-based modelling for indirect costs supplementing benchmarks Third-party cost assurance reports are provided. A detailed analysis of costs of securing land rights via the CPO and voluntary commercial agreement routes is provided and significant allowance is made for securing land rights at above market rates to expedite land agreements Costs for consent, legal and other professional services support are allocated to each specific consent condition and



ITT Question 10.1				
Approach to pricing – pricing methodology				
No submission (0)	Poor (1)	Satisfactory (2)	Good (3)	Excellent (4)
	<p>proposed approach to operation and maintenance</p>	<p>operations), with clear explanations and basis</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allowance for escalation is based on duration and cost type, but there is limited detail on indices or methodology • A high-level commentary is provided, with basic rationale • Key lifecycle drivers are identified (for example, major refurbishment cycles, technology refresh points) but quantification is lacking • Assumptions are not based on detailed modelling or scenario analysis 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Costs for consenting and legal support are well-justified and proportionate allowances are made, with robust supporting evidence • Costs for adherence to NESO codes are comprehensive, with detailed basis for complying with all code obligations and breakdown by activity type • Escalation costs are based on expected annual rates, schedule and cashflow using credible indices (e.g. BCIS, CECA, sector-specific escalation data), with clear rationale for index selection • A clear explanation of cost trends is provided (ageing curves, maintenance cycles, labour trends, escalation mix) • Assumptions are based on quantity changes, maintenance cycles, labour escalation trends or asset performance profiles • Assumptions are clearly connected to proposed approach to operation and maintenance 	<p>potential legal challenge; worst-case scenarios are modelled</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opportunities for efficiency in adhering to NESO codes as part of operation and maintenance are identified • A detailed lifecycle model with scenario testing is included (e.g. degradation, inflation paths, replacement cycles) • Quantified impacts of asset ageing, major maintenance cycles and contract refresh periods • Demonstrable cost stability or efficiency improvements with evidence • Trend analysis, sensitivity analysis, and explanation of cost changes over asset lifetime



Public

10.2. PPWCA risk management

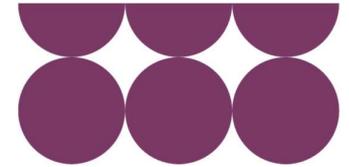
Qualifying bidders are to explain the tools, methods, data sources and assumptions used to determine the level of risk priced for items likely to change, why this level of allowance and/or contingency was chosen, and explain how the pricing approach manages the risk of cost increases at the PPWCA stage.

Potential risks that could lead to cost increase include, but are not limited to, underlying cost movement, time delays, inflation beyond index, scope change etc.

Qualifying Bidders are to make clear the allowances and contingencies for items likely to change during the Preliminary Works and construction phases within the cost input template (CIT).

The page limit for Question 10.2 is four A4 pages.

DRAFT - For comment



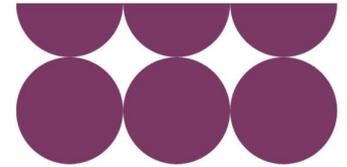
Evaluation criteria for Questions 10.2. PPWCA risk management

ITT Question 10.2				
Approach to pricing – PPWCA risk management				
No submission (0)	Poor (1)	Satisfactory (2)	Good (3)	Excellent (4)
<p>A response has not been provided.</p>	<p>The Qualifying Bidder’s approach to managing risk of cost changes at PPWCA stage is unclear or unreliable. The response inadequately addresses the question and/or includes inadequate supporting evidence.</p> <p>Features of a ‘Poor’ response may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A strategy for managing the risk of cost changes at PPWCA is not provided • There is a lack of consideration of cost elements that could change at PPWCA stage • Contingency is given as a percentage added to direct cost without explanation; no risk-based methodology has been used to determine contingency • There is no allowance for forex, or forex is explicitly excluded or not justified 	<p>The Qualifying Bidder has demonstrated that they have considered the risk of cost changes at PPWCA, but the level of detail or assessment is limited.</p> <p>Features of a ‘Satisfactory’ response may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A basic explanation of the approach to PPWCA risk management is provided • Allowance for certain cost elements that could change at PPWCA is made, but there are key elements not included • Contingency is based on risk assessment, with suitable methodology (e.g. Monte Carlo); it is high-level but risk-based • Allowance for forex is included for some but not all elements; where not allowed, exclusion is justified 	<p>A detailed strategy for managing risk of cost changes at PPWCA is provided and this supported by evidence.</p> <p>Features of a ‘Good’ response may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pricing assumptions reduce the risk of price increases at PPWCA, with allowances made within cost breakdowns accommodate anticipated changes within bid price • Assumptions are conservative and clearly explained • Allowance is assigned to all cost elements that could change at PPWCA stage • Contingency is derived from risk assessment and linked to timing of risk exposure, with clearly explained methodology • A calculated forex allowance is given with clear basis, currency mix, and cashflow profile; a hedging approach is outlined 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ‘Excellent’ responses are those which meet the evaluation criteria for a ‘Good’ response, but which also incorporate significant added value by demonstrably reducing the likelihood of cost changes at PPWCA stage. <p>Features of an ‘Excellent’ response may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pricing assumptions are based on a ‘worst-case’ scenario, making increases at PPWCA very unlikely • Contingency is based on quantified risk model (e.g. QRA, probabilistic/Monte Carlo methods), with contingency aligned to time-phased risk exposure. • A forex hedging strategy (which may include natural hedges) is provided, with modelling, scenario-testing, and contract alignment • Multi-index escalation with sensitivity analysis showing impact of different inflation



ITT Question 10.2				
Approach to pricing – PPWCA risk management				
No submission (0)	Poor (1)	Satisfactory (2)	Good (3)	Excellent (4)
				<p>scenarios; indexed forecasts with clear economic rationale</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Qualifying Bidder demonstrates an understanding of how contingency drawdown will be managed through the Qualifying Project lifecycle• Contingency is included for unforeseeable cost changes

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Question 11. Financing strategy

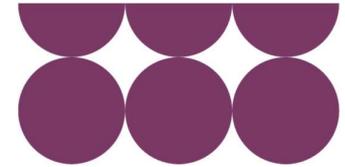
The following questions assesses the robustness, credibility and deliverability of the Qualifying Bidder's financing proposals across Preliminary Works, construction and financial close. Responses will be evaluated not on the absolute financing terms but rather the quality of evidence, capability, and readiness demonstrated.

11.1. Financial advisory

Qualifying Bidders must provide a letter of support from a reputable financial advisor confirming a comprehensive scope of work. Where relevant, a Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV) engagement letter must also be provided. For the purpose of this ITT, a 'reputable financial Advisor' is defined as a firm that is authorised by the UK Financial Conduct Authority (FCA) (or an equivalent regulator in a comparable jurisdiction), and that has demonstrable experience in UK or international infrastructure project finance.

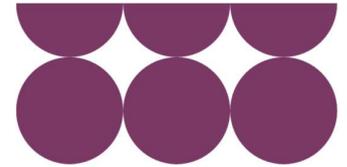
The page limit for Question 11.1 is 4 A4 pages.

DRAFT - For comment



Evaluation criteria for Question 11.1. Financial advisory

ITT Question 11.1				
Financing strategy – financial advisory				
No submission (0)	Poor (1)	Satisfactory (2)	Good (3)	Excellent (4)
<p>A response has not been provided.</p>	<p>The response inadequately addresses the requirement and/or includes inadequate supporting evidence.</p> <p>Features of a 'Poor' response may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Qualifying Bidder's financial advisor is not reputable, according to the definition in the question (not authorised by the FCA or other comparable regulator and/or they lack relevant infrastructure finance experience) No letter of support or no SPV engagement letter is provided (where applicable) The letter of support provided is generic, limited in scope, or does not describe any meaningful advisory role 	<p>The response adequately addresses the question and provides the minimum supporting evidence necessary.</p> <p>Features of a 'Satisfactory' response may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Qualifying Bidder's financial Advisor is reputable (authorised by the FCA or other comparable regulator and can demonstrate relevant experience in infrastructure finance) A letter of support is provided with a clear but basic scope aligned to the requirement A SPV engagement letter is provided (if applicable) There is evidence of capability but this is high-level, limited or generic 	<p>The response is clear, detailed and well-supported.</p> <p>Features of a 'Good' response may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Qualifying Bidder's financial advisor is reputable and has relevant UK or OECD experience, evidenced through comparable transactions A letter of support is provided and this clearly sets out the financial advisor's scope of work, responsibilities, key deliverables etc A SPV engagement letter is provided that is clear, detailed and aligned (if applicable) The financial advisor's experience demonstrably strengthens the financing There is clear integration between financial advisor inputs and the Qualifying Bidder's financing strategy 	<p>'Excellent' responses are those which meet the evaluation criteria for a 'Good' response, but which also incorporate significant added value.</p> <p>Features of an 'Excellent' response may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Qualifying Bidder's financial advisor has significant UK-regulated infrastructure finance expertise A letter of support is provided and this includes a detailed scope, methodology, timeline of advisory work and identified risk areas Evidence of proactive engagement Evidence that the financial advisor has already engaged with lenders, sponsors, rating agencies and/or other market participants Submission demonstrates exceptional confidence in the robustness, credibility and deliverability of the financing strategy



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11.2. Model audit

Qualifying Bidders are to provide a clean model audit letter, confirming that the financial model has been reviewed for logical integrity and that no material issues remain outstanding. For the purposes of this ITT, a suitable model auditor is defined as a firm that has demonstrable experience in auditing financial models for UK or international infrastructure/project finance transactions, and that is independent of the Qualifying Bidder and its consortium members.

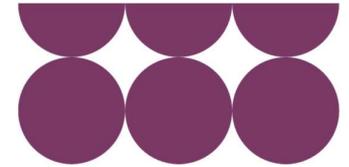
The model audit letter must confirm that the financial model:

- Has been reviewed in accordance with recognised model audit standards, including (where applicable): Logical integrity checks, Input–output reconciliation, Formula consistency and structure tests, Stress testing of key mechanics
- Has been constructed with logical integrity and operates as intended
- Correctly reflects the base case assumptions and input data provided by the Qualifying Bidder
- Contains no material issues above the materiality threshold defined in this ITT
- Provides a transparent audit scope, methodology and limitations, allowing NESO to understand the extent and depth of testing undertaken.
- Includes an issue log setting out:
 - Issues identified and how they were resolved
 - Confirmation that no material issues remain open

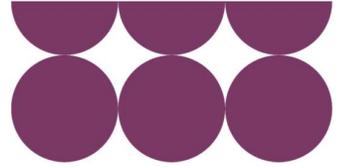
The financial model must fully reflect the costing assumptions and Cost Input Template provided in response to Question 10.1, including escalation, forex, labour rates, productivity, equipment, and long-term cost behaviour. So evaluators can trace TRS back to assumptions.

The page limit for Question 11.2 is four A4 pages.

Evaluation criteria for Question 11.2. Model audit

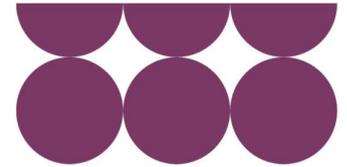


ITT Question 11.2				
Financing strategy – model audit				
No submission (0)	Poor (1)	Satisfactory (2)	Good (3)	Excellent (4)
<p>No model audit letter is provided, or letter is not from an independent third party.</p>	<p>The response inadequately addresses the requirement and/or includes inadequate supporting evidence.</p> <p>Features of a 'Poor' response may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The auditor's capability to assess project-finance models is not evidenced The auditor is not reputable (cannot demonstrate recognised model audit experience, are not known for UK infrastructure finance and/or have no track record on projects of comparable scale) The model audit letter does not confirm logical integrity, base case testing, or materiality threshold Outstanding issues above the materiality threshold No meaningful scope description is provided No issue log is provided No explanation of tests performed 	<p>The response adequately addresses the question and provides basic assurance.</p> <p>Features of a 'Satisfactory' response may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The auditor is independent and has some experience, but is not necessarily a recognised UK model audit specialist The model audit letter confirms that the model achieves its intended purpose and logical integrity under the base case No material exceptions above the threshold The model audit letter is high-level with limited detail A scope statement exists but lacks depth An issue log provided but this is basic 	<p>The response is clear, detailed and represents a credible audit model.</p> <p>Features of a 'Good' response may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The auditor is a recognised model audit firm with a strong track record in UK or international infrastructure finance The model audit letter confirms logical integrity, purpose alignment, base case verification, and no issues above the materiality threshold Materiality threshold clearly stated A detailed issue log with classifications, evidence of fixes and closure Clear scope of work covering integrity checks, accounting, tax logic, outputs validation Evidence that the auditor tested key financing metrics (DSCR, LLCR, gearing, covenant compliance) under base case and stress scenarios 	<p>'Excellent' responses are those which meet the evaluation criteria for a 'Good' response, but which demonstrate outstanding assurance and maturity.</p> <p>Features of an 'Excellent' response may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The auditor is demonstrably recognised as a leading model auditor in UK infrastructure, with extensive major-project credentials The model audit letter is of an exemplary standard and includes methodology, testing techniques, scenario/sensitivity verification, risk commentary, and materiality detail Clean audit with all issues resolved A full issue log with full resolution Evidence of iterative audit cycles Parallel checks or rebuilt logic segments Provides exceptional confidence in model robustness and audit quality



ITT Question 11.2				
Financing strategy – model audit				
No submission (0)	Poor (1)	Satisfactory (2)	Good (3)	Excellent (4)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Little or no assurance that the model has been robustly reviewed			

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11.3. Debt Term Sheet compliance

Qualifying Bidders must confirm that the indicative Debt Term Sheet provided in the ITT has been fully followed when compiling the financial model.

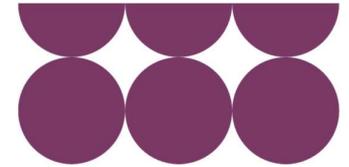
Qualifying Bidders must submit:

- A statement confirming whether: (a) the model fully complies with the indicative debt terms, or (b) deviations exist
- If deviations exist, the Qualifying Bidder must provide:
 - A clear justification for each deviation
 - An explanation as to why the deviation was necessary or appropriate
 - A sensitivity run showing the TRS results under full compliance with the ITT Debt Term Sheet

Qualifying Bidders should note that this question will be marked on a Pass/Fail basis, rather than being scored.

The page limit for Question 11.3 is three A4 pages.

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Evaluation criteria for Question 11.3. Debt Term Sheet compliance

ITT Question 11.3

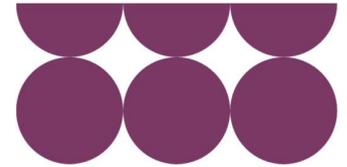
Debt Terms Sheet compliance

Pass

The response is comprehensive and detailed and fully addresses the question. The response provides excellent supporting evidence/information which is relevant and fully aligned to the requirement. The following will be features of a passing response:

- The assumptions used in the financial model completely follow the Debt Term Sheet provided to the Qualifying Bidder, or, where deviations are identified, it leads to an immaterial deviation in the financial model results (less than [x]% of the TRS)
- Any deviations are clearly identified, well-justified, and demonstrate alignment with the Qualifying Bidder's financing strategy
- A sensitivity run is provided to show TRS under full compliance with the provided Debt Term Sheet.

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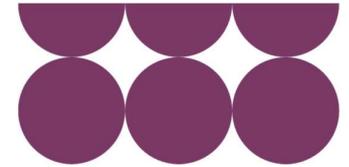
11.4. Funding of Preliminary Works

Qualifying Bidders are required to demonstrate that they have sufficient funding to complete the Preliminary Works phase. The response must include:

- A breakdown of the cash costs expected to be incurred during the Preliminary Works period (in other words, costs that must be paid upfront by the Qualifying Bidder and cannot be deferred to Financial Close)
- Identification of the sources of funds that will be used to meet these costs (including any milestone payments provided as per the tender)
- Evidence that an appropriate buffer is available to manage potential cost overruns

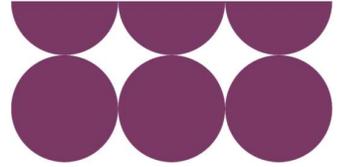
The page limit for Question 11.4 is four A4 pages.

DRAFT - For comment



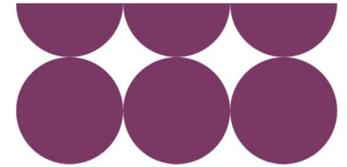
Evaluation criteria for Question 11.4. Funding of preliminary Works

ITT Question 11.4				
Financing strategy – funding of Preliminary Works				
No submission (0)	Poor (1)	Satisfactory (2)	Good (3)	Excellent (4)
<p>A response has not been provided.</p>	<p>The response inadequately addresses the requirement and/or includes inadequate supporting evidence.</p> <p>Features of a 'Poor' response may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Funding sources are unclear or unsupported No commitment letters or evidence of availability is provided, or these are vague or non-binding The cost breakdown for Preliminary Works stage is incomplete Evidence does not show sufficient funds to cover at least 100% of Preliminary Works No evidence of any financial buffer for cost overruns 	<p>The response adequately addresses the question and provides basic assurance.</p> <p>Features of a 'Satisfactory' response may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A reasonable cost breakdown of Preliminary Works is provided Funding sources are identified, with supporting evidence Commitment letters show sufficient funds to cover 100% to 140% of Preliminary Works Some buffer is allowed for cost overruns Supporting evidence is adequate but high-level 	<p>The response is clear, detailed and well supported.</p> <p>Features of a 'Good' response may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A clear and detailed cost breakdown is provided Funding sources are fully evidenced (for example, commitment letters, facility confirmations) Funding is available to cover ≥140% of Preliminary Works Evidence of conditionality, drawdown mechanics and timing Strong demonstration of financial readiness A clear explanation of buffer rationale and conditionalities The response is consistent with the Qualifying Bidder's wider financing strategy 	<p>'Excellent' responses are those which meet the evaluation criteria for a 'Good' response, but which demonstrate outstanding assurance and robustness.</p> <p>Features of an 'Excellent' response may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Funding commitments exceeding 140%, with strong evidence of availability Multiple funding sources or diversified internal funding capacity (for example, equity, shareholder facility, internal treasury, etc) Detailed statements from funders confirming readiness and drawdown mechanisms Detailed evidence of creditworthiness of funders Explicit buffer justification based on scenario testing or risk ranges Exceptional confidence in ability to meet Preliminary Works costs even under stress



ITT Question 11.4				
Financing strategy – funding of Preliminary Works				
No submission (0)	Poor (1)	Satisfactory (2)	Good (3)	Excellent (4)
				<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Clear contingency planning for different cost scenarios• Funding commitments aligned to milestones and risk profile

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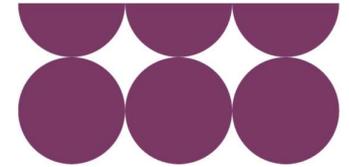
11.5. Equity funding of construction

Qualifying Bidders are to demonstrate that they have sufficient commitments to meet the equity requirement during construction, as set out in their financial model, including a buffer to accommodate any potential increase in equity needed following the PPWCA stage. The response must include:

- Evidence of committed (or conditionally committed) equity sufficient to meet the Qualifying Bidder's modelled equity requirement
- A commitment to invest equity at the internal rate of return (IRR) consistent with that in the Qualifying Bidder's financial model
- Evidence that an appropriate equity buffer is available to support potential increases in requirement

The page limit for Question 11.5 is three A4 pages.

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Evaluation criteria for Question 11.5. Equity funding of construction

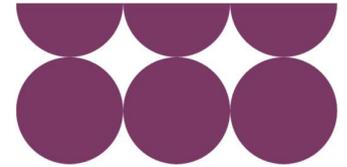
ITT Question 11.5				
Financing strategy – equity funding of construction				
No submission (0)	Poor (1)	Satisfactory (2)	Good (3)	Excellent (4)
<p>A response has not been provided.</p>	<p>The response inadequately addresses the requirement and/or includes inadequate supporting evidence.</p> <p>Features of a 'Poor' response may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No equity commitment letters are provided, or letters are vague, non-binding or not credible Funding does not cover 100% of the equity requirement in the Qualifying Bidder's financial model No demonstration of a buffer for equity increases after the PPWCA stage IRR commitment is missing or inconsistent in the financial model The commitment provider's creditworthiness is unclear 	<p>The response adequately addresses the question and provides basic assurance.</p> <p>Features of a 'Satisfactory' response may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Equity commitment letters are provided covering at least 100% of modelled equity requirement Commitments are conditional (for example, subject to award, due diligence, final documents) but remain credible IRR commitment broadly consistent with the Qualifying Bidder's financial model Equity providers are identifiable and credible Supporting evidence is adequate but high-level or lacking depth 	<p>The response is clear, detailed and well supported.</p> <p>Features of a 'Good' response may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commitment letters are provided covering at least 100% of equity requirement There is clear identification of equity sponsors and their credit strength Commitments aligned to the modelled IRR Evidence of drawdown process, conditionality and readiness Clear buffer explanation and rationale Strong alignment with the Qualifying Bidder's financing strategy Demonstrated experience in meeting equity commitments for comparable projects 	<p>'Excellent' responses are those which meet the evaluation criteria for a 'Good' response, but which demonstrate outstanding assurance and robustness.</p> <p>Features of an 'Excellent' response may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commitment letters are provided with firm terms (for example, binding subject to award) Multiple or diversified equity sources (for example, sponsor equity + shareholder facility + parent support) Detailed evidence of creditworthiness of equity providers IRR commitment confirmed explicitly and unambiguously Scenario-tested buffer justification Drawdown mechanics, governance and investment approvals clearly outlined Provides exceptional confidence in the Qualifying Bidder's ability



Public

ITT Question 11.5				
Financing strategy – equity funding of construction				
No submission (0)	Poor (1)	Satisfactory (2)	Good (3)	Excellent (4)
				to fund construction even under stress scenarios

DRAFT - For comment



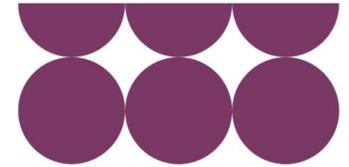
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11.6. Debt strategy

Qualifying Bidders are required to demonstrate a clear and credible approach to securing debt financing for the Qualifying Project. Their response to this question should explain how construction works would be financed through debt, and should set out:

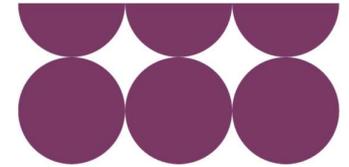
- **Debt market understanding** – demonstrate understanding of the current debt market, alternative sources of finance, key lender types (for example, banks, institutional investors), and how market conditions may evolve
- **Financing strategy as if financing today** – describe the likely debt structure, sources of debt, indicative terms, gearing expectations, covenants, reserve requirements, repayment profile and hedging assumptions
- **Debt support** – evidence of lender interest ‘in principle’, such as indicative letters of support from financial institutions that have reviewed available due-diligence materials
- **Alternative financing strategy** – outline a fallback strategy should the preferred source or structure not be available
- **Debt funding competition and Financial Close plan** – set out the proposed approach to running the debt funding competition and achieving Financial Close in line with licence requirements, including governance, timelines and lender engagement processes

The page limit for Question 11.6 is five A4 pages.

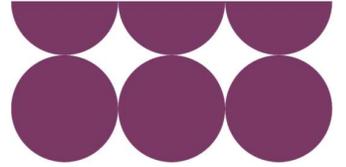


Evaluation criteria for Question 11.6. Debt strategy

ITT Question 11.6				
Financing strategy – debt strategy				
No submission (0)	Poor (1)	Satisfactory (2)	Good (3)	Excellent (4)
<p>A response has not been provided.</p>	<p>The response inadequately addresses the requirement and/or includes inadequate supporting evidence.</p> <p>Features of a 'Poor' response may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No demonstrated understanding of the current debt market, debt market conditions, or lender appetite Generic statements not linked to real lender behaviour No recognition of alternative finance sources or market evolution No identifiable debt structure Vague, generic or incomplete information No rationale for gearing, tenor, covenants or repayment structure No lender letters provided, or any letters which are provided are generic There is no evidence that lenders have reviewed due diligence 	<p>The response is credible but high-level.</p> <p>Features of a 'Satisfactory' response may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is evidence of a basic awareness of the debt market and common lender types Recognition of relevant debt sources (for example, banks, institutional lenders) Some reference to alternative sources of finance, though this is limited Generic commentary on market conditions High-level description of likely debt structure Terms referenced broadly (gearing, tenor, reserves) Limited tailoring to the Qualifying Project Letters are provided from recognised institutions indicating interest 'in principle', but these are general in nature 	<p>The response is clear, detailed and well supported.</p> <p>Features of a 'Good' response may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demonstrates informed, up-to-date understanding of current debt market conditions, including current liquidity, lender appetite, pricing trends and constraints Insight into market evolution Realistic, Qualifying Project-specific financing structure Likely lender groups identified with rationale Clear alignment with Qualifying Project risk profile Strong, credible lender letters are provided which confirm review of Qualifying Project due diligence, express willingness 'in principle' to lend, and outline indicative terms (tenor, ratios, reserves) Institutions have relevant project finance capability Alternative Financing Strategy 	<p>'Excellent' responses are those which meet the evaluation criteria for a 'Good' response, but which demonstrate significant added value, depth and maturity.</p> <p>Features of an 'Excellent' response may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sophisticated, evidence-based assessment of debt markets (for example, bank vs institutional appetite, tenor trends, hedging considerations, macro drivers) Clear analysis of how market evolution may impact the Qualifying Project Commentary on lender appetite, pricing trends and macro conditions Commentary linked to comparable transactions Qualifying Project-specific financing structure fully justified with scenario testing Integrated with supply chain, programme and contracting



ITT Question 11.6				
Financing strategy – debt strategy				
No submission (0)	Poor (1)	Satisfactory (2)	Good (3)	Excellent (4)
	<p>information or any Qualifying Project information</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No fallback strategy is provided No recognition of risks to primary financing path No clear long list/short list process for debt funding competition No reference to licence requirements No credible timetable No understanding of conditions precedents, documentation or lender processes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Limited reference to lender review of due diligence information Fallback is mentioned but not well developed and may be generic Basic/high-level description of debt funding competition and Financial Close plan Some reference to licence requirements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A practical, credible alternative financing strategy is described (for example, bank vs institutional shift) Shows understanding of market risks Clear, structured approach to running debt competition and achieving Financial Close A clear long list and short-list methodology for debt competition Defined lender evaluation criteria Realistic timetable aligned with licence Governance, roles and responsibilities are clearly described Good understanding of conditions precedent, documentation processes and execution pathway 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pre-agreed timeline with contingencies and scenario-tested mitigations Detailed lender letters are provided, referencing Qualifying Project specifics, risk areas and timelines Approaching term sheet-level detail voluntarily Evidence of active lender dialogue (for example, structured feedback, model review comments) Lenders outline structure, covenants, reserves, hedging expectations Reference to directly relevant precedent transactions Multiple well-developed fallback strategies for alternative financing Sensitivity analysis showing debt resilience Comprehensive debt competition plan including governance, scripts, lender pack outlines



ITT Question 11.6				
Financing strategy – debt strategy				
No submission (0)	Poor (1)	Satisfactory (2)	Good (3)	Excellent (4)
				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Detailed licence-compliant process (draft long list/short list protocols, scoring criteria) • Draft protocols, scoring criteria or closing script • Scenario-tested Financial Close plan • Evidence of prior experience delivering similar closings

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