s u	Answer
Lot structure	
The £2m value for Lot 1 - is that based on your understanding of the contracts that go through MCF? Even for mid-sized consultancies (maybe >1000 employees?) that £2m value represents a relatively high average value for individual call-offs.	We have reviewed the TAC values across all lots and are comfortable that the value is set at the appropriate level.
100 suppliers for lot 1 doesn't seem a lot given the number of SME consultancies around?	The target number of suppliers for Lot 1, which is subject to final review based on the feedback we have been soliciting, is designed to ensure a competitive yet manageable field for public sector buyers. This approach is intended to strike a balance between providing a diverse supply base and ensuring the necessary standards for risk management.
Can suppliers bid for all lots?	No, suppliers must choose between bidding for Lot 1 or for any of Lots 2 through 9. This intentional segregation is in place to actively increase diversity amongst suppliers on the framework.
How will a client be directed to use Lot 1 vs Lots 2-9? A multidisciplinary Lot usually limits call off contracts to those that require multiple disciplines (hence the name), but that is not the case here?	Customers have the flexibility to select the lot that best aligns with their specific needs. Guidance documents will be available to customers to explain the scope and services available within each lot.
Why no minimum on lots 2-10 if lot 1 has them all in but is under £2million? Won't people just use 2-10 and SMEs will be left out again?	We cannot impose a minimum contract value threshold across Lots 2-10 as we must preserve the essential flexibility for customers to select the lot that precisely aligns with their specific needs. However, the requirements for these lots, including the Technical Ability Certificates, are set to be proportionate to the breadth of the framework and reflective of the risk profile of the highest-value call-offs. To enhance the attractiveness and efficiency of Lot 1 for contracts within its scope, we are actively reviewing the introduction of streamlined call-off award procedures, such as an Award without Competition process via the digital filtering tool and enabling 'best of 3' for below threshold procurements. This is intended to make Lot 1 the most efficient route to market for buyers with requirements under the value cap.
Can I bid directly for lot 1 but be added as a Key sub contractor on lots 2-10?	This is currently under review.
Can different divisions of a company apply for different lots, or would it be considered the parent company making the application?	This is currently under review.
Can suppliers bid as a Prime for Lot 1, and as a subcontractor in other lots?	Yes
We are a group with an established business unit on an existing MCF4 lot (one of the lots 2-8) but we also have a new business unit (a separate legal entity) which is not yet on MCF4. Can the new business unit apply to be on Lot 1?	Yes, as long as the new unit is able to meet the entry requirements.
Our projects are mostly £100k-£1m and clients are keen to use the framework, both via direct award and with competition. They may not choose Lot 1. So if we go for Lot 1 we might miss opportunities. But Lots 2-9 have onerous TAC values. I don't see how this design meets our needs as a mid-size SME.	The framework is designed to offer a diverse choice for both suppliers and customers, with contracts between £100k and £1m being suitable for both Lot 1 and Lots 2-9; lot 1 will include a mechanism for award without competition. Ultimately, the decision of which Lot a supplier bids for, or which Lot a customer procures through, is a core commercial decision and responsibility that rests with the respective party.
Do the lots cover digital consultancy strategy and transformation?	Please review
You put additional pressure on SMEs as we will have to bid for more, smaller contracts when we don't have large bidding teams unlike large consultancies.	It is not the intention to place additional bidding pressure on SMEs. To directly mitigate the bidding burden, we are actively reviewing the introduction of streamlined call-off procedures, such as an Award without Competition through the digital filtering too, and also a 'Best of quotes' process.
You preclude SMEs for bidding for Lot 1 and the other Lots – how does that "ensure a broad mix of suppliers across the framework"? It just means that Lots 2-10 will only be provided by large consultancies and SMEs will be shut out - again.	The choice between Lot 1 and Lots 2-9 is a strategic decision designed to actively increase diversity and broaden the supply base. Lot 1 provides a clear, accessible route with lower barriers to entry for SMEs. This structure has not precluded capable smaller firms; on the contrary, the standard lot structure has historically ensured a broad mix of suppliers, with over 50% of framework places in previous iterations being awarded to SME suppliers, with SME suppliers present on every lot.
In combination with the LOT and TAC structure, some SMEs are going to be either excluded from being able to tender for this framework and/or restricted to LOT1 only. Would you consider looking at the numbers to support those SMEs in the smaller threshold or just starting out?	The choice between Lot 1 and Lots 2-9 is a strategic decision designed to actively increase diversity and broaden the supply base. Lot 1 provides a clear, accessible route with lower barriers to entry for SMEs. This structure has not precluded capable smaller firms; on the contrary, the standard lot structure has historically ensured a broad mix of suppliers, with over 50% of framework places in previous iterations being awarded to SME suppliers, with SME suppliers present on every lot.
You say you want "strong SME representation across government contracts"; however you force us to for Lot 1 the "low value" Lot	The choice between Lot 1 and Lots 2-9 is a strategic decision designed to actively increase diversity and broaden the supply base. Lot 1 provides a clear, accessible route with lower barriers to entry for SMEs. This structure has not precluded capable smaller firms; on the contrary, the standard lot structure has historically ensured a broad mix of suppliers, with over 50% of framework places in previous iterations being awarded to SME suppliers, with SME suppliers present on every lot.
In MCF4 larger competitors use Lot 3 (Transformation) to actively exclude SMEs from opportunities where we can compete. This does nothing to help this	Lot 3 is designed to cover the full spectrum of project scales; we set the criteria for the lot, but the decision on which opportunities to bid for ultimately rests with the suppliers.
Limiting suppliers to either Lot1 or Lots2-10 will reduce competition across the framework, and best value/quality may not be achieved	The choice between Lot 1 and Lots 2-9 is a strategic decision designed to actively increase diversity and broaden the supply base. Lot 1 provides a clear, accessible route with lower barriers to entry for SMEs. This structure has not precluded capable smaller firms; on the contrary, the standard lot structure has historically ensured a broad mix of suppliers, with over 50% of framework places in previous iterations being awarded to SME suppliers, with SME suppliers present on every lot.
Why not use a DPS instead of Lot 1?	The choice between Lot 1 and Lots 2-9 is a strategic decision designed to actively increase diversity and broaden the supply base. Lot 1 provides a clear, accessible route with lower barriers to entry for SMEs. This structure has not precluded capable smaller firms; on the contrary, the standard lot structure has historically ensured a broad mix of suppliers, with over 50% of framework places in previous iterations being awarded to SME suppliers, with SME suppliers present on every lot.
Some lots refer to types of work, others sectors. Why can the lots relate to types of work, e.g. transformation, as there will invariably be overlap.	The lot structure is designed to provide customers with a clear choice that best aligns with their specific needs, whether for a defined service line or a sector-specific requirement
Will all work through Lots 2 and above be "high value" (i.e. over £1.5m)?	No, there are no restrictions on values through lots 2-10.
As per the first round of engagement - this Lot structure and criteria is not supportive of SMEs looking to grow and compete with larger firms	We are committed to supporting capable SMEs. The process is accessible, evidenced by the fact that over 50% of framework places in previous framework iterations were awarded to SME suppliers, demonstrating that the structure and required standards have not excluded capable smaller firms.
Not all contracts procured via lots 2-9 will be above threshold, so why can't best of 3 apply here where the contract values are below threshold?	This approach is a deliberate and strategic decision to ensure strong diversification across the framework, actively encouraging the use of Lot 1 for call-off contracts within its £2 million limit.
The structure of the lots does seem to disadvantage SMEs, several of which are already trusted suppliers under MCF4	This structure does not preclude capable smaller firms; on the contrary, the standard lot structure has historically ensured a broad mix of suppliers, with over 50% of framework places in previous iterations being awarded to SME suppliers, with SME suppliers present on every lot.
You say you want "strong SME representation across government contracts"; however you force us to go for Lot 1 the "low value" Lot.	The choice between Lot 1 and Lots 2-9 is a strategic decision designed to actively increase diversity and broaden the supply base. Lot 1 provides a clear, accessible route with lower barriers to entry for SMEs. This structure has not precluded capable smaller firms; on the contrary, the standard lot structure has historically ensured a broad mix of suppliers, with over 50% of framework places in previous iterations being awarded to SME suppliers, with SME suppliers present on every lot.
Guidance on route to market rules under lot 1 vs others is critical to making an informed choice. Please can you provide?	Detailed guidance documentation will be made available, this will outline the services available via each lot. However, the final decision regarding the appropriate Lot or route to market remains the sole responsibility of the customer.
Would a DPS be a better function for multidisciplinary than Lot 1? This would retain the integrity of Lots 2-9 whilst having a broad range of suppliers.	Under the Procurement Act 2023, the Dynamic Purchasing System (DPS) has been replaced by Dynamic Markets, and we have opted for a Framework for Lot 1 to provide greater commercial flexibility. While Dynamic Markets are useful for maintaining an open supplier pool, they do not permit award without competition or the award of below threshold procuremnts, which is a critical requirement for many of our customers.

I would suggest that the Lot structure and limitation on Lot1 vs 2-10 will reduce the number of SMEs on the framework. How does this help improve accessibility?	The choice between Lot 1 and Lots 2-9 is a strategic decision designed to actively increase diversity and broaden the supply base. Lot 1 provides a clear, accessible route with lower barriers to entry for SMEs. This structure has not precluded capable smaller firms; on the contrary, the standard lot structure has historically ensured a broad mix of suppliers, with over 50% of framework places in previous iterations being awarded to SME suppliers, with SME suppliers present on every lot.
How does the limitation of either applying for Lot 1 or the others increase accessibility to SME's, especially those with specific skills?	The choice between Lot 1 and Lots 2-9 is a strategic decision designed to actively increase diversity and broaden the supply base. Lot 1 provides a clear, accessible route with lower barriers to entry for SMEs. This structure has not precluded capable smaller firms; on the contrary, the standard lot structure has historically ensured a broad mix of suppliers, with over 50% of framework places in previous iterations being awarded to SME suppliers, with SME suppliers present on every lot.
Our experience of MCF4 is that sub £1.5m work is let through non Lot1, if this continues it will exclude SMEs rather than support them. Will this be addressed?	The choice between Lot 1 and Lots 2-9 is a strategic decision designed to actively increase diversity and broaden the supply base. Ultimately, the decision of which Lot a supplier bids for, or which Lot a customer procures through, is a core commercial decision and responsibility that rests with the respective party.
Is there a risk that the lot structure will confuse buyers and single service opportunities will be issued via Lot 1, when they should be issued via 2-9?	Single service opportunities are not restricted to Lots 2-9; customers have the flexibility to select the lot that best aligns with their specific needs. Ultimately, the choice of the appropriate lot is the customer's own commercial decision.
Tender period	
Can we please not have Tender deadlines on December 26th. Christmas holidays should be taken into account.	We try to avoid having tender deadlines out over the holiday period where possible; sometimes circumstances beyond our control mean that this is not possible.
Is September a realistic date ? MCF4 was due to be published in August and then was published in mid November.	The delay in the publication of MCF4 was due to circumstances beyond our control.
Which portal will the tender response be expected to be entered in? Can you please ensure that entry of prices is as simple as possible i.e. not having to paste hundreds of individual values into separate web pages as this makes entry errors much more likely.	The tender response must be entered through the CCS eSourcing Portal. We understand your concern about manual entry and are committed to ensuring the pricing schedule is as simple as possible.
As well as the TACs do you also expect to have written response evaluation as part of the tender and a rate card element?	The exact evaluation mechanism, including the written response evaluation and rate card element alongside the final requirements for the TACs, is still being determined.
what are the proposed weightings for quality/technical and price evaluation? Will price still be evaluated based on median of rate card?	This is still to be determined.
Will there be a new e-portal for CaPS opportunities? Getting a bit of portal fatigue with all the different ones.	The publication of opportunities is down to the individual customer to determine, and therefore, we have no direct influence over their choice of e-portal for CaPS opportunities.
Will there be " technical questions" to answer for each Lot ? Most suppliers use AI to respond to these questions - how will you evaluate the response given AI 'answers'	Yes; the exact evaluation methodology is still being developed.
I note that far fewer suppliers planned to be included on the main lots vs MCF4. Based on seeing the same question and challenge I've seen from others, is there a chance that these limits will be reconsidered?	The number of places for suppliers on lots 1-6 of CaPS has been increased; lots 7-10 remain the same.
Please can you share more details on the expected evaluation approach	The evaluation mechanism is still to be determined.
Standards and requirements	
Social value – presumably we only submit a return if we have work through the framework? This is yet another burden on SMEs. And another annual report re modern slavery.	The requirement to report on social value is a mandatory part of Central Government policy (PPN 002) and the Procurement Act 2023.
Wll suppliers on lots 2-10 need to supply a PCG as part of Gold FVRA	The submission of a Parent Company Guarantee is not a universal requirement of the Gold Standard FVRA. It is a risk-mitigation tool used only where a supplier's individual assessment indicates a specific financial risk that needs addressing.
Why do you make Lots 2 – 10 have a Gold FVRA? Yet again you disadvantage SMEs. MCF3 was not Gold FVRA yet we are delivering services to multiple public sector organisations at reasonable rates while receiving excellent feedback – yet you are making it impossible for us to continue to do so.	The Commercial Finance team conducted an assessment of the financial risk for all lots of MCF4 using the Playbook's methodology tiering tool, which validated that all lots would be designated as 'Gold' standard. The assessment for CaPS followed the same methodology and achieved the same result with the exception of lot 1.
You say you want to "remove barriers to entry" and enhance opportunities. So don't apply a Gold FVRA totally unnecessarily. Or preclude us from going for Lot 1 and Lots 2-10.	The Commercial Finance team conducted an assessment of the financial risk for all lots of MCF4 using the Playbook's methodology tiering tool, which validated that all lots would be designated as 'Gold' standard. The assessment for CaPS followed the same methodology and achieved the same result with the exception of lot 1. The choice between Lot 1 and Lots 2-9 is a strategic decision designed to actively increase diversity and broaden the supply base. Lot 1 provides a clear, accessible route with lower barriers to entry for SMEs. This structure has not precluded capable smaller firms; on the contrary, the standard lot structure has historically ensured a broad mix of suppliers, with over 50% of framework places in previous iterations being awarded to SME suppliers, with SME suppliers present on every lot.
CCS guidance states "Gold FVRA contracts are typically larger, longer contracts for complex or critical works and services." Lots 2-10 are specialist but not necessarily larger, longer, complex or critical so why have you blanket applied Gold?	The Commercial Finance team conducted an assessment of the financial risk for all lots of CaPS using the Playbook's methodology tiering tool, which validated that lots 2-10 would be designated as 'Gold' standard; the same standard was applied to MCF4.
Because of the evaluation model last time it became a race to the bottom on price, as quality scores were so high. How will you prevent that this time?	The evaluation methodology has not yet been set.
CCS guidance states "Gold FVRA contracts are typically larger contracts for complex services." 2-10 are not necessarily larger, complex or critical so why Gold?	The Commercial Finance team conducted an assessment of the financial risk for all lots of CaPS using the Playbook's methodology tiering tool, which validated that lots 2-10 would be designated as 'Gold' standard; the same standard was applied to MCF4.
Why have you moved to Gold FVRA for Lots when under MCF4 it was silver?	The Commercial Finance team conducted an assessment of the financial risk for all lots of MCF4 using the Playbook's methodology tiering tool, which validated that all lots would be designated as 'Gold' standard. The assessment for CaPS followed the same methodology and achieved the same result with the exception of lot 1.
Scope and service lines	
Can we get a list of the service lines in advance?	The service lines are available on the Consultancy and Professional Services (RM6399) web page
Stark similarities between CaPS & CPS2. There is so much crossover in scope it doesn't make sense to have multiple frameworks running in tandem that utilise the same services and suppliers. CCS should consider merging frameworks & have more lots/suppliers under one to save on management cost.	While there is technical crossover, CCS maintains separate frameworks for Consultancy and Professional Services (RM6399) and Construction Professional Services (RM6356) because the commercial risks, legal requirements, and delivery playbooks are fundamentally different. Construction-specific frameworks are governed by the Construction Playbook and utilise industry-standard contract forms like NEC4 or JCT, which are specifically designed to manage the unique risks of the physical built environment. In contrast, RM6399 follows the Consultancy Playbook and a more flexible commercial structure suited for strategic, business, and policy advice.
Can we confirm whether design services are included within the Scope of this Framework? Particularly Lot 8 Infrastructure?	This would depend on the nature of the output, please check the publised CPV codes for clarity. You can view the scope of services under each lot on the RM6399 webpage.
Will there be an opportunity to comment on the proposed service lines for each lot? The current descriptions are rather bizarre in places .	If you have any feedback that you would like to share, please submit via the info@crowncommercial.gov.uk email address.
Misc	

Would it be possible to get a breakdown of spending per lot for MCF3/4 by department or policy area (e.g. FCDO, HO, foreign affairs and international development, security etc)? Might it be possible to get a forecast for this for CaPS?	No additional detail regarding spend breakdown will be provided. Please see the slides from the first engagement sessions for the detail that is available; these are available on the CaPS web page.
Is CAPS still intended to include local government procurement? In the webinar, the host specifically mentioned "central government" procurement.	It covers the whole of the public sector and also the third sector.
Thank you for organising this call. Who is the lead for this framework, and who can we approach if we have other specific questions?	Any additional questions should be sent to info@crowncommercial.gov.uk, with RM3699 in the subject. This will reach the team.
Is it possible to share attendee details to enable potential partners / collaboration on lots?	No, we do not have permission from attendees to share their details.
Would it be possible to get a breakdown of expected budgets per lot?	No additional detail regarding spend breakdown will be provided. Please see the slides from the first engagement sessions for the detail that is available; these are available on the CaPS web page.
What steps does CCS take to balance the efficiencies of large, multi-disciplinary contracts with ensuring fair access for specialist EDI SMEs?	CCS balances the efficiencies of large-scale contracts with fair access for specialists by using a granular 10-lot structure, allowing niche SMEs to qualify for specific technical areas rather than the entire framework's scope.
Can you share any details of the expected spend through the framework by organisation and type of work?	No additional detail regarding spend breakdown will be provided. Please see the slides from the first engagement sessions for the detail that is available; these are available on the CaPS web page.
What will the objective criteria for direct award be under CaPS? Many buyers want to use DA for MCF but the PA23 requirement for criteria need to be workable for suppliers and buyers.	There is intention to have a direct award mechanism for all lots with the additional option for 'best of 3 quotes' purchasing within lot 1. The exact mechanism for the direct award is still under development.
Can you provide anticipated Lot Spend ?	No additional detail regarding spend breakdown will be provided. Please see the slides from the first engagement sessions for the detail that is available; these are available on the CaPS web page.
What is the spend and spend by lot so far for MCF4 and can you update on this nearer the time	No additional detail regarding spend breakdown will be provided. Please see the slides from the first engagement sessions for the detail that is available; these are available on the CaPS web page.
Will there be any further supplier engagement or i think now basically set in stone par minor tweaks	There will be no additional engagement sessions focussed solely on CaPS, the design is now set, subject to minor amendments. Following the completion of the main engagement, we are planning a couple of sessions focused on the bidding process and demystifying the associated requirements. Please monitor the website, as details will be published there.
Where will responses to these questions be shared?	Yes
could you please share the link to the earlier slides?	Earlier slides can be found on the CaPS web page
Experience indicates that buyers don't always have clairty on when different route to market are available. the rules will inform lot selection	Detailed guidance documentation will be made available, this will outline the services available via each lot. However, the final decision regarding the appropriate Lot or route to market remains the sole responsibility of the customer.
What circumstance do you anticipate procurement running via Lot 1 rather than the other Lots? What is the incentive to engage SMEs vs more established firms?	The decision regarding the appropriate Lot or route to market remains the sole responsibility of the customer.
How will you improve the Basware service?	RM6399 will not Basware.
How will the customers decide on whether to let work through Lot1 vs other Lots? Will this be value driven, ensuring all work above £2m goes through Lots 2-10?	The decision regarding the appropriate Lot or route to market remains the sole responsibility of the customer. Please be advised that Lot 1 has a maximum contract value cap of £2m (including VAT), and consequently, no work exceeding this value can be procured via Lot 1.
What guidance will be provided to buyers for choosing Lot 1 v others when value is less than £2m?	Detailed guidance documentation will be made available, this will outline the services available via each lot. However, the final decision regarding the appropriate Lot or route to market remains the sole responsibility of the customer.
How do we add comments outside the call?	Any additional questions or comments should be sent to info@crowncommercial.gov.uk, with RM3699 in the subject. This will reach the team.
Driving vfm, quality and supporting UK business, means greater use of UK based niche suppliers - how is this supported?	We drive value and support for niche suppliers by removing the "one-size-fits-all" barriers that traditionally favor larger firms. RM6399 uses a specialised lotting structure that allows SMEs to bid for specific technical areas rather than needing to cover the framework's entire scope.
i wasn't registered on the MC4F, do I need to complete an SQ for this framework? if so how? and where do I get registered?	MCF4 is a closed framework, entry onto this framework as a prime supplier is no longer possible.
SME's using primes to engage leads to margin stacking, and arguably claims by primes without declaring subs is what happens,	Your comment has been noted.
how could a micro SME navigate this? It's currently not clear to me	The framework is structured to ensure inclusivity for all suppliers; provided the core requirements for the specific Lot are met, all entities are eligible to submit a bid.
Where will buyers publish multidisciplinary opportunities that exceed the Lot 1 thresholds?	The publication of opportunities is down to the individual customer to determine, and therefore, we have no direct influence over their choice of e-portal for CaPS opportunities.
Can a supplier achieve a position on Lot1 and subcontract through a prime on other lots?	Yes
What are the expected volumes/value per Lot? Do have you data from MCF4 to inform this?	No additional detail regarding spend breakdown will be provided. Please see the slides from the first engagement sessions for the detail that is available; these are available on the CaPS web page.
Do you have any salient customer feedback available from the pre-market activity which has helped to inform the proposed agreement/lot structure?	Extensive customer engagement has been conducted, including one to one engagements with key customers and open online events.
Under MCF4 the number of suppliers per lot was varied from the ITT due to scoring structure - will this be the case in CaPS or will the numbers be as presented?	We intend to keep the numbers to be as presented but reserve the right to alter them if it is deemed necessary.
The character limit in Slido restricts the question being asked - can we ask more detailed Qs in any way?	Any additional questions should be sent to info@crowncommercial.gov.uk, with RM3699 in the subject. This will reach the team.
Technical Ability Certificates	
Please can you be specific with regards to the dates within which work cited in TACs will need to have been done to be eligible - e.g. is it 3 years back from tender response deadline?	A detailed guidance document with worked scenarios will be published to support suppliers with identifying permitted and impermissible TAC examples. Work will not need to have started within 3 years but will need to have been completed or the criteria met within the 3 year defined period.
What are the values for TACs	The values are as stated in the presentation, which can be found on the web page. Please not that these are not finalised and are subject to change.
The minimum value of TAC is exceptionally high. This in itself could preclude SMEs from being able to participate. Are you prepared to consider reducing these values?	We have reviewed the TAC values across all lots and are comfortable that the value is set at the appropriate level.
Please can you make it abundantly clear for TACs what is required. There have been issues of ambiguity for all CCS frameworks this year when applying	A detailed guidance document with worked scenarios will be published to support suppliers with identifying permitted and impermissible TAC examples.
How are the TACs to be completed. Last time they were via a template which customers seemed hesistant to sign. The online form used by G-Cloud 15 most recently was more effective.	A detailed guidance document with worked scenarios will be published to support suppliers with identifying permitted and impermissible TAC examples. The exact mechanism for completion has not yet been determined.
How many TACs can we submit for Lot 1 and the other Lots?	A detailed guidance document with worked scenarios will be published to support suppliers with identifying permitted and impermissible TAC examples.
Could we recommend that a range is included in the contract values to make Lot 1 work better for SMEs? How about a min contract value for Lot 2-9 of e.g. £200k, forcing more work to Lot 1, and then a lower max value for Lot 1 so that it's comparable to the TAC values for Lots 5-9; e.g. £1m.	We have reviewed the TAC values across all lots and are comfortable that the value is set at the appropriate level.
Will tenders be offered based on TAC coverage (i.e if you only meet 5/11 criteria for Finance lot, may you potentially be excluded from bidding for opportunities in that lot that primarily concern service lines you haven't covered in TACs)?	Bidding for Call-Off Contracts will be strictly limited to the service lines for which evidence has been provided and validated within your respective TACs.

This isn't inclusive for SMEs - only the bigger ones. It would be better to understand turnover instead of 100k contracts - which can be hard to demonstrate for smaller providers	We have reviewed the TAC values across all lots and are comfortable that the value is set at the appropriate level.
If you only select the minimum number of service lines for the TACs, does this mean suppliers are excluded in receiving call-offs for the service lines not ticked?	Bidding for Call-Off Contracts will be strictly limited to the service lines for which evidence has been provided and validated within your respective TACs.
For TACs is it the contract start date which needs to be within 3 years? If so this disadvantages suppliers who use longer term contracts (ie 5-10years).	A detailed guidance document with worked scenarios will be published to support suppliers with identifying permitted and impermissible TAC examples. Work will not need to have started within 3 years but will need to have been completed or the criteria met within the 3 year defined period.
Lot 1 TAC min value should be halved to £50k, since many SME consultancy organisations will typically deliver high quality, low value interventions. Thus a high TAC will stop SMEs applying	We have reviewed the TAC values across all lots and are comfortable that the value is set at the appropriate level.
The minimum TAC of £100,000 for Lot 1 seems unreasonably high. Can you explain the reasoning behind that figure?	We have reviewed the TAC values across all lots and are comfortable that the value is set at the appropriate level.
Please ensure that if there are delays, that the Christmas holidays are taken into account, and the deadline is extended accordingly. TACs are significantly more difficult to obtain near the Christmas holidays.	We try to avoid having tender deadlines out over the holiday period where possible; sometimes circumstances beyond our control mean that this is not possible.
Do TAC values include VAT?	Yes
Would TAC's be able to be used to cover more than 1 service line? The 2 TAC's per service line requirements for Lot 1 seems quite stringent given it is meant to have lower entry requirements.	A detailed guidance document with worked scenarios will be published to support suppliers with identifying permitted and impermissible TAC examples, and details of how many TACS are required.
What's is the thinking for the minimum service lines for lot 2 being set at 10	The requirement for a minimum of 10 service lines in Lot 2 (Strategy and Policy) is a deliberate design choice based on the scale and nature of the projects these lots serve. Work through Lot 2 typically involves large-scale, multi-disciplinary programmes that often span the entire breadth of the Lot's scope.
Hi - for TAC's can these be from Canada? Recent CCS bids (TS4) allowed for treaty sates to be used, which canada is one	A detailed guidance document with worked scenarios will be published to support suppliers with identifying permitted and impermissible TAC examples. TACs may be from UK or international work.
The minimum value of TAC threshold is very high and would exclude a lot of SMEs, would you consider reducing the numbers?	We have reviewed the TAC values across all lots and are comfortable that the value is set at the appropriate level.
If we decide to apply for say 50 service lines under Lot 1 (to provide coverage of services across the higher value lots), that will mean producing 100 TACs. Is this not considered a high burden on suppliers?	A detailed guidance document with worked scenarios will be published to support suppliers with identifying permitted and impermissible TAC examples, and will detail the number of TACs required.
Can you please ensure renewals are allowed on TACs, we have long term relationships over many years who are our best advocates but end up not being able to use them because they're happy to resign with us repeatedly - this should be the sign of a good supplier.	We will take this into consideration.
TAC values are very high. One of our USPs as an SME is to support public service orgaisations to achieve things with less onerous spending than a big consultancy - so our contract values are typically smaller with big impact. These make excellent evidence!	We have reviewed the TAC values across all lots and are comfortable that the value is set at the appropriate level.
Are TAC's restricted to only PS experience	No, TACs are not restricted to only public sector experience. The contracts that are eligible to be used for TACs can be from the Public Sector, Private Sector, or the Third Sector.
Those TAC values potentially exclude inovative SME's looking to engage	We have reviewed the TAC values across all lots and are comfortable that the value is set at the appropriate level.
When you say the TACs are not set in stone at the moment do you mean the requirements may change?	Yes, they are potentially subject to change.
What dates will the work covered by the TACs have to be within?	A detailed guidance document with worked scenarios will be published to support suppliers with identifying permitted and impermissible TAC examples. Work will not need to have started within 3 years but will need to have been completed or the criteria met within the 3 year defined period.
TAC rules out a huge amount of highly skilled experienced smaller consulting firms. Three £600k contract example for procurement consulting is crazy.	We have reviewed the TAC values across all lots and are comfortable that the value is set at the appropriate level.
TAC values mean this is not really suitable for SME bidders…	We have reviewed the TAC values across all lots and are comfortable that the value is set at the appropriate level.
Regarding lot 1, could you clarify the TAC threshold? Is it based on previous work values or a minimum it can apply for?	We have reviewed the TAC values across all lots and are comfortable that the value is set at the appropriate level. You can review the current TAC thresholds within the supplier presentation, though please note they may be subject to change.
Under Lot3 the TAC is a large value - shouldn't this be based on quality of delivery / complexity of work rather than on the total value?	We have reviewed the TAC values across all lots and are comfortable that the value is set at the appropriate level.
Given MCF4 has only just been let, could "TACS" used to achieve a place on MCF4 be taken into consideration rather than us go through the whole process again?	MCF4 is a separate framework, therefore TACs will need to be submitted again for RM6399.
Has analysis been done on the value of individual contracts being let through the Lots on MCF4 to ensure that the new Lots and TACS are set at the right level?	We have reviewed the TAC values across all lots and are comfortable that the value is set at the appropriate level.
Contracts procured might not be above threshold. Yet smaller suppliers who could deliver these contracts excluded by TAC requirements?!?	We have reviewed the TAC values across all lots and are comfortable that the value is set at the appropriate level.
Pricing	
Can you explain "Best of 3" for Lot 1?	For "below-threshold" procurements, the "Best of 3 Quotes" is a streamlined process used to ensure taxpayer value without a full national tender. The buyer invites at least three capable suppliers to submit a written quote against the same set of requirements. These are then evaluated side-by-side to determine the best balance of quality and price. This "light-touch" approach is specifically designed to be accessible for SMEs, as it removes the complexities of large-scale formal competitions while maintaining a fair and transparent selection process.
Will CCS repeat the use of the median of day rates again for the pricing, as you did for MCF 3 or 4.	This pricing evaluation strategy has not yet been determined.
Our experience is that many customers rely on T&M, will there be encouragement for customers to move to fixed price / other mechanisms?	The framework is designed to support a range of commercial models beyond Time & Materials. In line with the Consultancy Playbook, we actively encourage customers to transition toward Fixed Price or Output-Based delivery models where the scope is clearly defined. These mechanisms shift the focus from "inputs" to "outcomes," providing better budget certainty for the customer and rewarding efficient delivery from the supplier.