

Question	Response
Key Details about Spark	
The OJEU states a length of 4 years this is different to what you have described.	4 years is the total possible length of the DPS. CCS anticipate putting in place version 2 of the DPS after 2 years. We will need to allow a transition period for products to move to an alternative framework if the product type is removed from the next version of Spark. There is some contingency built in to allow this transition.
Could you cancel the agreement earlier?	Yes, early termination is possible as detailed in the DPS Agreement.
You mentioned running Spark 1 and Spark 2 concurrently for 3-6 months to allow customers to complete their further competitions. Is there a benefit to doing this for suppliers too?	Yes this will allow suppliers to migrate their route to market - so we don't remove a route to market without supplying a new one
Who is the category lead?	Simona Paliulyte is the strategic lead for Spark. Lucy McCormack is the Commercial Agreement Manager.
How much spend do you anticipate in the first 12 months?	£10m - £20m is anticipated in the first 12 months, growing steadily thereafter. The total maximum spend under the agreement is £650m so if we start getting near that we will need to do version 2 of the Spark DPS more quickly.
Is this for products only or a mix of product and services?	The focus is the technology and services needed to support the technology / create the outcome using the technology. We would not expect to see any managed service like arrangements.
Is Spark more for hardware than Cloud/ SaaS?	Spark evolved from new hardware requirement and is not focussed on Cloud/ SaaS. G- Cloud is the CCS Commercial Agreement that offers Cloud Software (SaaS), Cloud Hosting and Cloud Support
When will the pin be released?	The contract notice has been published. No associated PIN was published.
Is it going to be mandated as per the 2016 policy notice suggesting that frameworks should be?	We are unaware of any CCS frameworks being mandated.

Is Spark just aimed at SMEs?	No, although Spark is trying to level the playing field for SMEs and breakdown barriers to them doing business with government, larger suppliers have the same opportunity as SMEs to apply to the Spark DPS and to compete in public sector further competitions.
Will the number of suppliers within each filter area be the same or will it vary?	There could be quite a few suppliers for AI but fewer for other areas. Customers are out there trying to promote this so we anticipate somewhere in the low 100s of suppliers in total, not 3,000 odd covered by GCloud. This is a different proposition and we after something quite specific.
Supplier Engagement	
What events will you be doing to engage with suppliers?	We will be holding twice yearly Innovation Knowledge Forums with both customers and suppliers to exchange knowledge, showcase new suppliers and develop a pipeline of customer requirements. We will also be running monthly webinars for newly appointed suppliers and producing regular newsletters
Can you tell us what you're doing to encourage suppliers to use it?	We will be holding regular monthly supplier briefing webinars and will be working with Gov Tech Catalyst and Innovate UK to engineer introductions to potential suppliers and customers
How many suppliers have joined the Spark DPS?	204 at the moment but there is no cap on the number that can join and suppliers can continue to join at any time
Can a supplier access the DPS bid pack without first registering on the Supplier Registration Service?	<u>Yes they can be following this link: Bid Pack Link</u>
Supplier Requirements to get onto Spark	
How is a principal contract for goods and/or services defined (Q180)	Question 150 (Q180) of the standard SQ does NOT require a response from the supplier as stated in the DPS Needs document at para 38. These questions are not applicable as the standard SQ is for use across all government departments and these questions do not require a response as we ask for a contract example as part of the DPSQ.

<p>Can CCS confirm whether a case study is necessary for this. we have a number of clients with new technology that is being looked at by gov but don't have case studies at the moment.</p>	<p>As per Attachment READ FIRST RM6094 DPS Needs V1.PDF Quality Assessment - Technical & Professional capability (Q133) of the Standard Selection Questionnaire and Question 48 to 50 of the Dynamic Purchasing Questionnaire (DPSQ): 31. You are required to provide one (1) contract example in accordance with the response guidance provided in Attachment 7 - Response Guidance for Contract Example which form part of RM6094 Spark DPS bid pack.</p>
<p>Can you tell me the options for the contract example?</p>	<p>Contract examples may include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) A contract funded by a government catalyst or similar that has been successful in developing a technology based product/ service to meet a public sector need. 2) A contract with a public sector body that was procured under an Innovation Partnership Procedure and has been successful in developing a technology based product/ service to meet a public sector need. 3) A proof of concept with a public sector customer for a novel technology based product/ service to meet a public sector need. 4) Any other contract, within the public or private sector that involved the development of a novel technology based product/ service that could meet a public sector need.
<p>Do we have to complete the Financial assessment template contained within the bid pack?</p>	<p>No this is for information only. It doesn't need to be completed.</p>
<p>Is a parent company guarantee required?</p>	<p>Depending on the outcome of the financial assessment a parent company guarantee might be requested.</p>
<p>Can you please clarify if the Parent Company Guarantee is not a Mandatory requirement? Can we progress with the Framework if we answer "No" to question "Would the parent company be willing to provide a guarantee if necessary?".</p>	<p>The parent guarantee isn't mandatory and would be picked up during the finance checks if needed but you can preemptively propose one if needed</p>

<p>I'm a start-up with no D&B history, can I still bid?</p>	<p>Yes. However, CCS will request further financial information if your organisation fails to meet the Dun and Bradstreet financial threshold score of 60. Please refer to the DPS Needs for full instructions to support this process and for further information of the types of additional financial data you may be requested to provide.</p>
<p>Is there any flexibility in the financial conditions? If we are to use a guarantor can we flag that up in the application process?</p>	<p>CCS use a supplier's DUNS number and Company Registration number and the credit reference agency Dun and Bradstreet to ascertain a supplier's financial stability score. In the case of Spark, the financial stability threshold is 60. However further assessment by CCS' Commercial Intelligence team may deem the risk acceptable, once supporting documentation and a Contract Guarantor is obtained.</p>
<p>Do you need one contract example for Radical Innovation and one for Disruptive?</p>	<p>No, you need one example for either, not both. As per Attachment READ FIRST RM6094 DPS Needs V1.PDF Quality Assessment - Technical & Professional capability (Q133) of the Standard Selection Questionnaire and Question 48 to 50 of the Dynamic Purchasing Questionnaire (DPSQ): 31. You are required to provide one (1) contract example in accordance with the response guidance provided in Attachment 7 - Response Guidance for Contract Example which form part of RM6094 Spark DPS bid pack</p>
<p>Do we need to provide one contract example or three contract examples</p>	<p>Bidders are only required to provide one contract example.</p>
<p>For the Contract example, we need to provide the Start and End date but if the project is still ongoing what should we enter in the end field?</p>	<p>CCS can confirm you input the expected end date of the contract (ie a date in advance)</p>
<p>If we are a participant in a GovTech catalyst challenge, would the point to apply to Spark be at the END of Phase 2 if & when a client chooses to take the MVP that has been created during Phase 2? Or do we need to be on Spark to actually participate in Phase 2?</p>	<p>If you are a participant in a GovTech catalyst challenge, the point to apply to Spark would be at the end of phase 2. Whether a customer chooses to progress the MVP further doesn't matter. You don't need to be on Spark already to actually participate in phase 2. The 2 things are independent of one another.</p>

Can I use a US deployment of Intelligent Voice as my disruptive or radical innovation? Or does it have to be UK / EEA based?	The US is fine as its a GPA country.
With it being for innovative technology, Spark could be the first time a supplier brings a product to market, as such previous contract examples may not be available, is there a way around this?	There isn't a way around this because a contract example of either radical or disruptive innovation is required as a mandatory requirement in order to be appointed to the Spark DPS. However your contract example does not need to be a public sector example as long as you can describe how it could be used within the public sector.
ISO10007 - do I need it? It is within the User Needs and seems a strange request	You do not need to be certified but we would expect work to completed in line with this, and other, standards stated where applicable.
Do I need Cyber Essentials to bid?	You need to commit to attaining Cyber Essentials and to have been certified for it ahead of entering into your first call-off. More details on Cyber Essentials and it's necessity within our customer base can be found here https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/procurement-policy-note-0914-cyber-essentials-scheme-certification
Is it just the prime contractor who needs to have Cyber Essentials accreditation in order to be successful in applying to the Spark the Technology Innovation Marketplace DPS?	All proposed sub-contractors must also meet the Cyber Essentials accreditation requirement for your application to be successful.
I have Cyber Essentials Plus, does this meet the needs?	Yes, suppliers with Cyber Essentials Plus meet the requirement to have at least Cyber Essentials
Can you be ISO27001 certified instead of Cyber essentials?	Cyber Essentials certification is a requirement for all suppliers, details of this are in the PPN linked to for question 7, above.
Do suppliers have to have any certification or be on any associations?	Suppliers are required to meet all mandatory requirements including standards as set out in the Customer Needs document which forms part of the bid pack. Supplier are also required to fulfil the Cyber Certification obligations as detailed in the Selection Questionnaire and DPS Agreement (Clause 9).

<p>To meet CCS' criteria to be successful in applying to Spark, what constitutes "proven" technology innovation?</p>	<p>"Proven" technology innovation means that it has been proven to work for a customer, be that a public or private sector customer and the customer is happy to state in writing in their letter of confirmation of works that the technology innovation works. Suppliers who have reached Stage 2 of a Gov Tech Catalyst challenge issued on behalf of a customer and produced a minimum viable product would have an example of "proven" technology innovation at that stage and could use this in their contract example.</p>
<p>PPN 14/15 clearly states: "Do not" Use selection criteria requiring a bidder to have a general policy on apprenticeships in order to participate in the competition. Selection criteria addressing apprenticeship policy should instead invite bidders to demonstrate how their current skills policy, including any policy on apprenticeships, would support developing and maintaining skills required under the contract." With this in mind, please would the Authority consider replacing the yes/no question 146 with a text box that will enable us to provide a more nuanced answer to the question of skills development?</p>	<p>CCS can confirm that question 146 of the Standard Selection Questionnaire cannot be replaced for a text box to be included. However, bidders can provide evidence to support their responses to question 146 in the evidence section of the selection questionnaire by uploading evidence at question numbers 177 and 178, if required.</p>
<p>We note that paragraph 2 of PPN 14/15 states that "Public procurement of contracts with a full life value of £10 million and above and duration of 12 months and above should be used to support skills development and delivery of the apprenticeship commitment. " This is a framework contract and the CCS has highlighted that there is no committed spend associated with it. With this in mind, will we still pass through the selection process even if we tick "No" in response to question 146?</p>	<p>You will still pass the selection process, even if you tick "no" in response to question 146.</p>
<p>Supplier Application Issues</p>	

<p>In the READ FIRST Document its mentioned that we do not need to answer Part 3: (Dept of Health Questions) - Q157 - Q161. But I cannot see Q157, after Q156 there is directly Q158. Also since the application was not allowing me to save and proceed without answering Q158 - Q161 I had to answer it and its not allowing to deselect it. Could you please guide on this.</p>	<p>The website should allow you to do this. However, if you are having technical issues please contact NQC who should be able to answer any queries. Their contact number is 0845 299 2994.</p>
<p>For the bit about PSCs, does this count the original founders? Or just outside investors?</p>	<p>It's just whoever has more than the 25% stake in the company.</p>
<p>As mentioned in the 'RM6094 Customer Needs v1' document- Bidders are required to indicate which categories and services they are able to bid for. It is therefore essential that Bidders select the exact elements relevant to their service offering in order to be invited to the relevant Competitions. Bidders need to specify the services as per in the Attachment 1 - Matrix. Request to clarify where we need to select these services as we could not see these services while completing the Selection Questionnaire.</p>	<p>CCS can see that you have started to complete the standard Selection Questionnaire, but this has not yet been completed, once this is completed and submitted you will then be presented with the DPSQ (the DPS specific Selection Questionnaire) were you will then be presented with the service offerings available, which you will select all the services that you can deliver. For clarity, the services are not shown as questions in the standard Selection Questionnaire, but this (the Standard SQ) must be completed before you are presented with the DPSQ questions, which will include questions on the service offering.</p>
<p>Can you please clarify if we need to create separate Selection Questionnaire for each service offering. e.g Artificial Intelligence and Automation-Machine Learning a separate Selection Questionnaire and for Artificial Intelligence and Automation-Robotic Process Automation a separate Selection Questionnaire</p>	<p>CCS can confirm that you are not required to complete a separate Selection Questionnaire for each service offering.</p>
<p>If we provide three contract examples do we need to provide the signed 'Letter of Confirmation of Works' for all three examples or only one</p>	<p>Bidders are only required to provide one contract example with a Letter of Confirmation of Works.</p>
<p>Could the Authority confirm that Rate Card information is not required at this stage and will only be required when responding to a Customer Call for Competition? Do Customers have the option to go Single Source or are competitions open to all suppliers who have registered the relevant services?</p>	<p>In order to appoint a supplier to this (or any other) DPS the contracting authority doesn't assess forward looking 'award' criteria, this includes price. All pricing will be set during a customers call-off.</p>

<p>Our bid contains some commercially sensitive information that cannot be public facing. Could you please confirm if the responses will be made public?</p>	<p>As stated in the document entitled ' READ FIRST RM6094 DPS Needs' of the Bid pack, if you feel that a particular clarification question should not be published, you must tell us why when you ask the question. We will then decide whether or not to publish the question and the response or return a response to you confidentially via the DPS Marketplace.</p>
<p>We have nearly completed the submission. However, upon doing this, we have encountered a new section named as SQ Evidence Submission (questions 166 to 185) - do these need to be completed? There is an ask for the Contract Example, which is capped at 4,000 characters - but we have already put in the Contract Example in the SQ where there was no word or character cap for the Contract Example description. This "new" questionnaire also asks for a Letter of Confirmation of Works - is this also required? I have had a look through the bid pack and cannot find a section which provides step by step guidance on how to put forward a submission to get onto the Spark DPS - I am thinking to possibly restart the submission to avoid any issues.</p>	<p>CCS can confirm with reference to the Selection Questionnaire question numbers 166 to 185 these relate to evidence requests which align to responses provided earlier in the standard Selection Questionnaire. Suppliers can submit evidence at any time where applicable and you can therefore disregard these questions. Regarding the contract example, as stated in the DPS Needs document at paragraph 31 to 34, when completing the contract example you can either complete question 133 of the Standard Selection Questionnaire, as you have done, or you can complete question 50 of the DPSQ Questionnaire. As you have already completed Question 133 you should find that your contract example has pulled through and is populated in Question 50 of the DPSQ. We will accept the information detailed in Question 133 of your Selection Questionnaire. Regarding the Letter of Confirmation of Works, this is a mandatory requirement and is detailed in the DPS Need document at paragraph 35 to 37, and the template for the Letter of Confirmation of Work can be found at Attachment 8 of the Bid Pack. On the final point the DPS Needs document contains details of how to submit a compliant tender for the Spark DPS, and will make reference to other Attachments that Suppliers must read and complete.</p>

<p>You clarified that - 'You must then describe the contract example at question number 133 of the Standard Selection Questionnaire OR at question 50 of the Dynamic Purchasing System section of the Selection Questionnaire. If you choose to complete question number 133, your response will automatically transpose to question 50'. Therefore the contract example you used at Q133 of the standard Selection Questionnaire has pulled through to Q50 of the DPSQ. But in my case, I had to fill all the contract example details again for Q50.</p>	<p>This sounds like a platform related issue. If you are having technical issues, please contact NQC who should be able to answer any queries. Their contact number is 0845 299 2994</p>
<p>Please can I clarify with you whether the customer contract example provided needs to directly relate to delivery methods as listed within the Customer Needs document, page 10.? Furthermore, if the customer contract example given relates to , for example the delivery method 'Internet of Things', and the bidder is awarded onto the framework, are they eligible to bid on all requirements, not just internet of things? thank you</p>	<p>1) Yes your contract example needs to relate to at least one of the technologies listed in the Customer Needs document, pages 10 to 24. 2) The filter system is used to match customers to suppliers who can meet their needs, you will be invited to tenders for filters combinations that match those of your organisation, you should choose the filters that accurately match your own skills and capabilities. You can update your filters at a later date as your capabilities change. Customers can use just one or multiple filters, this includes combinations of problem area, technologies and locations.</p>
<p>Please can you confirm what is required for "Attachment 1 - Customer Filter" in terms of completion requirements and upload process by the Supplier?</p>	<p>CCS can confirm that Attachment 1 is for information only, providing bidders with details of the services filter options within this DPS, which bidders will be presented with as part of their supplier journey.</p>
<p>Could you clarify whether the accreditations listed in Section 3.2 of the Customer Needs Pack are mandatory criteria? If so, where in the Supplier Questionnaire/DPSQ Online Response are we expected to respond?</p>	<p>You do not need to be certified but we expect work under any call-off to carried out in line with the standards listed.</p>

<p>Within the Dynamic Purchasing System Agreement, page 23/24 section 25.4 competitive terms, point 25.4.1 and within Appendix 6 - DPS Schedule 4 - Order Form and Contract Terms, page 51 section 29.5 competitive terms, point 29.5.1, we would like to modify the clause to protect the level of security of the products and services we could deliver under this contract and therefore we propose the highlighted addition to the terms: If the Customer is able to obtain from any Sub-Contractor or any other third party more favourable commercial terms with respect to the supply of any materials, equipment, software, goods or services used by the Supplier or the Supplier Personnel in the supply of the Goods and/or Services **without compromising security**, then the Customer may: This would for example protect the delivery of the service where an item of critical IT hardware is procured from a supplier that manufactures goods in secure locations/countries over a supplier that does not.</p>	<p>The substitute goods should be able to perform the same function without detriment to the delivery of services/ outcomes, part of this would be the security of the goods, at present this is implicit rather than explicit but we will factor this into our guidance for customers. In relation to the terms we do not believe that suggested amendments are necessary but they would not constitute a material change if a customer and supplier wished to clarify things further at call-off."</p>
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We are having difficulty completing the online SQ for RM6094 DSP Spark Framework: 127 Are you able to provide a copy of your audited accounts for the last two years, if requested? - As a small company our accounts are exempt from audit so we have to answer No. We think you intended that if the answer is No, we should drop down to question 128, as the documents it asks for down seem necessary if you have audited accounts. But you haven't indicated this on the questionnaire. 128. Please indicate which of the following you can provide (3 options) - We could provide all 3 options, but as the evidence section of the SQ immediately asks for documents to be uploaded if we tick a box, we would prefer not to have to furnish all the documents required if we did so. Are these meant to be exclusive options and in descending order? i.e 'if no, then drop down to the next'? 130. Are you able to provide parent company accounts if requested at a later stage? - Saying yes to this leads to an immediate requirement to "Upload documentary evidence for parent company accounts" - not "at a later stage" - very misleading. Can we leave this unsubmitted until requested at a later stage? 131. Would the parent company be willing to provide a guarantee if necessary? - Again, saying Yes to this leads to an immediate requirement to "Upload documentary evidence for parent company guarantee". But this hasn't been necessary in the 15 years we have been working with CCS frameworks! Can we also leave this unsubmitted until requested at a later stage? 132. Would you be able to obtain a guarantee elsewhere (e.g. from a bank)? - Surely this is redundant if we answered Yes to 131. In the light of your response, we may need to modify some of our submitted responses. But there does not appear to be a route for us to do so. Selecting the 'Start Selection Questionnaire' link and clicking "Yes, I want to re-use an existing Selection Questionnaire" does not bring up the responses we gave in our original submission.

Q127 - CCS confirms we require a full set of accounts to do our assessment therefore although as a small company your accounts are exempt from audit they will need to be audited as part of your submission. Q128 - If you can provide the first option A statement of the turnover, Profit and Loss Account/Income Statement, Balance Sheet/Statement of Financial Position and Statement of Cash Flow for the most recent year of trading for your organisation - this would be the preferred option but if not then option two and then option 3. Q130 - Yes if required evidence can be requested at a later stage. Q131 - Yes if required evidence can be requested at a later stage. Q132 - If you are able to submit a guarantee through your parent company then you could not require to obtain a guarantee, however if the information you provide fails then a guarantee maybe required.

<p>Will this be a suitable route to market for providers offering security related technology products and services?</p>	<p>Please see the User Needs document and Attachment 1 which explain the security products within scope of this agreement, products outside of the described scope cannot be offered.</p>
<p>Please advise what the deadline is for submitting questionnaires</p>	<p>"CCS confirm that suppliers can request to participate for the RM6094 SPARK DPS at any point during the lifetime of the DPS, there is no deadline for submissions as detailed in the DPS Needs document of the RM6094 bid pack. The opportunity remains open at all times unless the DPS expires or is terminated in accordance with the DPS Agreement. With effect from 15/04/2019, customers will have access to the DPS to use to conduct call for competitions based on their individual project requirements."</p>
<p>We have registered with the SRS. From our Dashboard, we can locate the Standard SQ with 160+ questions, but not the DPSQ. How can we locate the DPSQ questions?</p>	<p>It appears that you still have a couple of questions left to complete on the standard selection questionnaire. Once you have completed all of the questions you should be presented with text stating that your selection questionnaire is complete and you can click 'complete and exit' to save the selection questionnaire. You should then be presented with the DPS SQ part of the selection questionnaire.</p>
<p>I have answered the Q133 of the Selection Questionnaire and also described the Contract example as per the guidelines provided in Attachment 7. Now I have progressed and reached the 'Registered2' stage and it's again asking the same details about the Contract example. Can I here use the same 500 words description of Contract example as I had used in Q133 of 'Selection Questionnaire</p>	<p>Please refer to the 'READ FIRST RM6094 DPS Needs' document which is located within the Bid Pack, as per paragraph 33 on page 12 it states 'You must then describe the contract example at question number 133 of the Standard Selection Questionnaire OR at question 50 of the Dynamic Purchasing System section of the Selection Questionnaire. If you choose to complete question number 133, your response will automatically transpose to question 50'. Therefore the contract example you used at Q133 of the standard Selection Questionnaire has pulled through to Q50 of the DPSQ.</p>

<p>Regarding the reference case, will the company name, point of contact details etc. be listed on the portal, or will they be confidential?</p>	<p>The contract example details will not be listed on the portal, but they will be able to be viewed by Customer organisations who select you as a successful Supplier on any Competition they hold as confirmation of your ability to deliver the required services</p>
<p>For the Contract example, we need to provide the email address of the Customer Contact person, is this mandatory ?</p>	<p>Yes as per 'Attachment 7 - Response Guidance for Contract Example', which can be found in the Bid pack, the third bullet point in the compliance criteria states that CCS may wish to contact the Customer in order to validate the contract example.</p>
<p>For contract example, we need to provide 'Estimated contract value' which is sensitive information. Is it Mandatory to provide these details?</p>	<p>CCS can confirm that a figure does need to be input into the 'estimated contract value' box to enable you to progress with the application. This information will only be available to view by CCS and to customer organisations who wish to appoint you as a supplier for any call off competitions that they hold</p>
<p>Could you please confirm if the contract example word limit is 500 words?</p>	<p>CCS can confirm that there is a character count limit on Q51 of the DPSQ, the contract eample. The character limit is 4,000 characters</p>
<p>You clarified that -CCS can confirm that there is a character count limit on Q51 of the DPSQ, the contract example. The character limit is 4,000 characters. But while answering the Contract Example Description for Selection Questionnaire "137. If you cannot provide at least one example customer contract, in no more than 500 words please" so this means the description should be 500 words.</p>	<p>correct, the word limit is 500 words.</p>

<p>Please may we be issued a Word version of the framework agreement?</p>	<p>No a word version is not available but a non watermarked pdf version will be made available on you being successfully appointed as a Supplier on the DPS. This version will be presented when your application is placed in the 'Agreeing' stage (this is the stage were you will electronically agree to the DPS Terms and Conditions), as a DPS is a wholly electronic process you will be presented with a non watermarked version of the DPS Agreement at this stage, and this should be downloaded by the Supplier and will be your DPS Agreement</p>
<p>To whom it may concern, We note that paragraph 2 of PPN 14/15 states that "Public procurement of contracts with a full life value of £10 million and above and duration of 12 months and above should be used to support skills development and delivery of the apprenticeship commitment. " This is a framework contract and the CCS has highlighted that there is no committed spend associated with it. With this in mind, will we still pass through the selection process even if we tick "No" in response to question 146?</p>	<p>You will still pass the selection process, even if you tick "no" in response to question 146</p>
<p>Suppliers agreeing to the DPS Agreement</p>	
<p>Once I have "agreed" my DPS Agreement, is there anything else I need to do as a supplier?</p>	<p>No, you will then have a status of "appointed" and can appear in customers' shortlists, depending on their requirements and whether the filters a customer applies matches those you applied to provide</p>
<p>Supplier Marketing</p>	
<p>I have been successful in applying to the Spark Technology Innovation Marketplace DPS and want to issue a press release, what should I do?</p>	<p>Please send any press release you wish to issue to info@crownccommercial.gov.uk for them to review the wording . The Spark Category Manager can provide the Supplier Marketing Toolkit which includes logos and guidance that you will need to adhere to.</p>
<p>Could you please send me the supplier marketing toolkit for future reference?</p>	<p>The supplier marketing toolkit is not held centrally so suppliers need to email the commercial agreement manager and ask them to send them the supplier marketing toolkit and CCS approved logos.</p>

<p>How is CCS marketing Spark and the appointed suppliers</p>	<p>CCS is marketing Spark and its appointed suppliers in a variety of ways. For example when suppliers are first appointed to Spark, CCS asks for a supplier profile summarising what the supplier provides in the way of innovation through Spark and how this could help customers. We have also written blogs that have been published in CCS newsletters and externally by Catapult cities and shared on social media and LinkedIn . We are also planning a series of posts promoting each appointed supplier individually. When we receive supplier case studies, we will be sharing these too on social media, on LinkedIn and in our customer newsletters. We talk about the types of innovation provided by appointed suppliers on our monthly customer webinars aswell. We will be holding twice yearly Innovation Knowledge Forums with both customers and suppliers to exchange knowledge, showcase new suppliers and develop a pipeline of customer requirements.</p>
<p>Updating Supplier details</p>	
<p>How do I go about updating the filters that I have selected for my profile?</p>	<p>The DPS Needs document in the Spark bid pack explains on page 20 "Appointed" of the "Updating Answers in the Selection Questionnaire, Dynamic Purchasing System Questionnaire (DPSQ) section:" how to update your answers to the 'quality Assessment – Section 2' questions of the DPSQ including the filters and supplier details (contact name and email address).</p>
<p>Once appointed to the SPARK DPS will suppliers have the ability to add/update Subject Area and Delivery Method as new products become available?</p>	<p>Yes - the supplier will be able to update their responses to the filter questions in the DPS selection questionnaire to reflect changes in capability.</p>

<p>If we have been asked to state that our profile is up to date but we have obtained Cyber Essentials since completing our application to Spark and being appointed, do we need to update our responses to the DPSQ on the Supplier Registration Service or just inform the Spark CAM that we have Cyber Essentials and provide the certificate? How will NHSx know that our profile is up to date?</p>	<p>Once appointed to the DPS you can update your answers and/or contact details provided in the 'Quality Assessment – Section 2' only of the DPSQ section of the Selection Questionnaire. This means you are unable to change your response to the question about your Cyber Essentials certification status. However as you were asked in Section 1 of the DPSQ section of the Selection Questionnaire to confirm you agree to have Cyber Essentials certification on or before the execution of the first contract, in line with Clause 9 of the DPS Agreement, this is not an issue. You can send your newly obtained Cyber Essentials certificate to the Spark Commercial Agreement Manager and if the customer "requests evidence" via the Supplier Registration Service in order to see your Cyber Essentials certificate, you will be notified and can then provide it to them by email.</p>
<p>If we update our offering for a new service that we do not have a case study is that ok?</p>	<p>Once you are appointed to the Spark DPS, you are only able to update your responses to the DPSQ part 2 as detailed in the DPS Needs Document in the Spark bid pack. This means that you can update the subject areas, delivery methods, locations and security levels you say can provide, as well as the contact details for your organisation. You can also amend the details of your one contract example but you do not need to provide more than one contract example.</p>

<p>How long does it take to reassess and approve a supplier?</p>	<p>This depends. CCS Sourcing should be able to confirm approval of the requested change and advise that your status is in 'agreeing' stage fairly quickly if there are no issues with your requested change (within a couple of working days). However if the CCS Sourcing team are assessing a number of supplier applications to the DPS at the same time, in order to adhere to the 15 working day deadline to appoint or reject suppliers applying to the DPS for the first time, it may take a little longer. It can also take longer to approve the requested change if, when assessing your requested change, your organisation's financial stability score (as determined by Dun and Bradstreet) has dipped below the threshold of 60. CCS and the supplier concerned will then have a maximum of fifteen (15) working days to work jointly to rectify any issues where possible in accordance with Regulation 34 (Dynamic Purchasing Systems) of PCR 2015. In the event that the issue cannot be rectified within the 15 working days, we will 'reject' your DPS submission as an interim measure whilst the necessary further actions are undertaken. You can then reapply to join the DPS within a timescale specified by us via the SRS platform.</p> <p>There is no set timeframe as such for which we are obligated to re-assess as a supplier will still be "Appointed" within their DPS specific SRS profile and will still be visible to buyers, even when making changes. Of course, in terms of best practice with customers we aim to approve requested changes as soon as feasibly possible.</p>
<p>Supplier responsibilities once on the agreement</p>	

<p>With regards to the supplier profile is there a format to follow?</p>	<p>With regards to the supplier profile, suppliers are essentially given a fairly free reign. The Spark Commercial Agreement Manager asks for 2-3 lines summarising the innovation suppliers will be providing through Spark and how that will be of benefit to their customers. If suppliers provide substantially more detail, this has to be cut down for the blogs (that will be included in the CCS customer newsletters).</p>
<p>Is there a requirement to bid once on the framework? e.g a minimum amount of bids?</p>	<p>There is no KPI or other clause linked to suppliers bidding on opportunities. We are aware that some suppliers may have very niche capabilities and this would present them with problems.</p>
<p>If a supplier successfully wins a contract from a Public Sector body, when can they expect to be paid for the service?</p>	<p>Payment terms as per Contract Schedule 3 of the Contract Order Form and Contract Terms between a Customer and Supplier are payment within 30 days of receipt of a valid invoice.</p>

<p>How does that comply with the Government's Faster Payment Scheme?</p>	<p>If you are referring to the Government's Prompt Payment Policy, this will come into force in September 2019 and will affect suppliers bidding for Government contracts above £5m per annum. As part of the selection process contracting authorities will be looking back at your payment performance for the previous two 6 month reporting periods. Your business's current performance will therefore be considered and may have an impact on your ability to win business. This policy was announced last year by Oliver Dowden, Minister for Implementation for the Cabinet Office. It requires bidders (during the selection process) to answer a series of questions about their supply chain management and tracking systems, which will include providing details about payment practices, processes and performance including the percentage of invoices paid within 60 days across both their private and public sector business. Suppliers who are unable to demonstrate that they have systems in place that are effective and ensure a fair and responsible approach to payment of their supply chain may be excluded from bidding.</p>
<p>We were appointed to the Spark DPS in June, but we haven't been notified to submit MI yet - have I missed something?</p>	<p>You won't have missed anything. As long as you have confirmed to CCS who will be responsible for reporting the MI each month for Spark (contact name and email address), this will be used to set up your organisation as a supplier against the Spark DPS on Report-MI. My colleagues in the MI team will then contact you 4 or 5 days before the 1st of the month in which you are expected to start reporting MI the first time a report is due. Suppliers who are new to CCS will also receive an email with their login details to RMI. Existing suppliers will have Spark added to the list of agreements they report on.</p>

<p>When would be the first MI submission since we just joined Spark. Would it be Nov or Dec?</p>	<p>The month in which you will first start reporting MI will depend upon how quickly my colleagues set you up as a supplier on the RMI platform to report MI. If you haven't had an email with log in details by the 26th of the month, I would imagine you won't start reporting MI until the month after next. All Spark suppliers will receive an email from the CCS MI team 4 or 5 days before the 1st of the month in which they are expected to start reporting MI the first time a report is due.</p>
<p>I am having issues with RMI and have not been receiving my invoices. Who do I need to inform?</p>	<p>Please inform the CCS Financial team by emailing ccsfinance@crownccommercial.gov.uk</p>
<p>Re 1% management levy. Can you explain if this includes vat?</p>	<p>All invoices that you receive from CCS for the management levy will include VAT unless you have specified to CCS Finance that you don't pay VAT</p>
<p>With regards to the case studies - is this relating only to the work acquired through the DPS?</p>	<p>Yes you are required to provide a case study relating to the innovation provided through Spark to the customer upon entering your first call off contract and thereafter you are asked to provide a minimum of one case study annually, assuming you enter into further call off contracts</p>
<p>If you never win a contract do you still need to report/produce a case study</p>	<p>If you never win a call off contract under Spark, you will not be asked to provide a case study relating to that call off contract. You will however still be required to report monthly management information, even if you have not won a call off contract. When you first log in to Report-MI, your homepage should be "Tasks". You will see one "task" to report MI for the month for each CCS commercial agreement you are on. If you click on the task for Spark and click "report no business", you then just need to click on "confirm no business" to confirm you have not transacted any business as yet because you don't have any live call off contracts.</p>
<p>When using the Case Study Template, is there a maximum number of pages or word count limit for the submitted case study</p>	<p>CCS can confirm that there is no maximum word count or number of pages for the Suppliers Case Study as this will not be uploaded onto the SRS system, which has limits on the numbers of characters in the response boxes.</p>

DPS Agreement	
The DPS agreement is marked as 'sample' - are all the documents final?	The DPS Agreement in the bid pack is sample watermarked. If your organisation is appointed to the DPS you will have the option to download a non watermarked version of the DPS Agreement at the time that you agree to it.
Are the terms negotiable?	The DPS terms aren't but if you spot any issues prior to the opening of the DPS let us know. Call-off terms can be altered by the customer, any alterations should be prior to their tender being issued and will not be material changes.
Customer Engagement	
Where can I find the current Spark supplier list?	The link to the current Spark supplier list is: https://supplierregistration.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/dps-suppliers/spark
How many customers are signed up already?	Customers are not signed up per se because of how CCS works as a trading body but we are having lots of conversations with, in particular, Central Government departments about using it, so we anticipate seeing quite a few customers from big Central Government departments but also customers in the Wider Public Sector. NHS Innovation is trying to pump it out into the Health sector and we are receiving increasing enquiries from Local Government.
How many further competitions have been run through Spark?	3 further competitions have been completed with call off contracts awarded and one is underway currently that we know of , although Pre Tender Market Engagement Supplier day events have been run through Spark and CCS know of several customers planning to run further competitions in the next couple of months

<p>Do you have any details of what customers have used Spark for so far?</p>	<p>The Contract Award Notices posted to Contracts Finder by customers who have informed us that they have entered into a call off contract can be found by following the below links: https://www.contractsfinder.service.gov.uk/Notice/aa627e44-8106-45df-b352-94b7d7861b5d https://www.contractsfinder.service.gov.uk/Notice/006e94a5-59e4-404e-a6a7-e263b8358357 In a couple of months we also aim to start to build up a library of case studies that we can use to promote Spark and the innovation being provided.</p>
<p>What is the most important thing a newly appointed supplier must do to maximise a chance of being noticed by a customer</p>	<p>Please ensure you have sent your 2-3 lines summarising the innovation that you offer under Spark that will be included in the CCS Spark Supplier Profiles which can be found under the Documents tab of the CCS Spark webpage: https://www.crowncommercial.gov.uk/agreements/RM6094 You are also free to publicise your appointment to Spark and the innovation you are offering through Spark in press releases and on social media for customers to see. Please simply ensure that you adhere to the guidelines within the CCS supplier marketing toolkit and identity guidelines and use the CCS supplier logos provided by me or my colleague Mark.</p>
<p>For the Knowledge share Forums - what information can we send to you so you can update customers?</p>	<p>Please ensure you have sent your 2-3 lines summarising the innovation that you offer under Spark that will be included in the CCS Spark Supplier Profiles which can be found under the Documents tab of the CCS Spark webpage: https://www.crowncommercial.gov.uk/agreements/RM6094 If there is any additional promotional or marketing information that you wish to share with me, that provides further detail on what you offer to customers under Spark, that would also be gratefully received but is not mandatory. If you are speaking with a customer about an opportunity under Spark, please let me know as the customer may not have been in touch with me.</p>

<p>You mentioned you send out LinkedIn updates for customer opportunities - how do we see these?</p>	<p>The individual that submitted the application to Spark (or the individual whose contact details you provided if you updated the contact details part of your DPSQ application to Spark) will receive an invitation from me or my colleague Mark Baxter, inviting you to the Spark Supplier LinkedIn group. If you accept the group rules and supplier code of conduct, you will receive my LinkedIn link to connect and I can then add you to the group. You can request to join the LinkedIn group simply by emailing me. If you don't wish to join, the individual that submitted the application to Spark (or the individual whose contact details you provided if you updated the contact details part of your DPSQ application to Spark) will receive the updates regarding customer opportunities by email too so you won't miss out.</p>
<p>Customer Further Competitions</p>	
<p>Can you explain more about the PTME?</p>	<p>The Pre Tender Market Engagement (PTME) is an optional element of the Spark customer buying journey. The customer buying journey including the optional PTME stage is described in both the Spark Customer Guidance (page 15) and the Spark Supplier Guidance (page 15). These documents are both available on the CCS Spark webpage.</p>
<p>Is there a limit on the call-off value?</p>	<p>No there is no limit on the call-off value. With our colleagues in GDS and other departments we will providing customers with advice on how to get the best outcome from working with suppliers, this will focus on agile methodologies and scaling as capability grows.</p>
<p>Is there a total limit on call-off value?</p>	<p>The OJEU notice has been published with a maximum value of £650m, this is the upper limit of our expected spend through the agreement.</p>
<p>Is there a minimum term for the contract entered into between the customer and the supplier?</p>	<p>There is no minimum term for the call off contract</p>
<p>Is there a limit on call-off length?</p>	<p>Call-offs are capped at a total of 5 years with an initial maximum call-off length of 3 years.</p>

Can I let a call off contract for 5 years from the start?	No, the maximum duration of the initial term is 3 years and the maximum duration of call-off contracts under the agreement is 5 years which includes any extensions.
How do I shortlist suppliers?	Spark: the Technology Innovation Marketplace is hosted on the Dynamic Purchasing System Marketplace and found under the Supplier Registration Service From here you will need to choose "Access as a buyer" and confirm your acceptance of the customer access agreement before you can use the filters to create a supplier shortlist. Please read the Customer guidance (available in the attached documents) for comprehensive details about how to conduct a call for competition.
How long is my shortlist valid for?	We recommend that you use your exported supplier shortlist within 2 working days, as new suppliers may be added at any point, thus changing the list of suppliers eligible to complete
Will all parties on the DPS be invited to bid for call-offs?	All suppliers identified through a customers filter selection will be invited to participate initially. The customer may use a multi-stage process to further refine the supplier list prior to a final tender.

<p>What is the difference between the assessment of suppliers undertaken for them to get onto the Spark DPS and the capability assessment?</p>	<p>The assessment of a supplier's application to the Spark DPS by CCS involves assessment of answers to selection based questions which ask suppliers to provide contact details, a contract example, a letter of confirmation of works, DUNS number and Company Reg number and certification among other things. The capability assessment is an optional stage in a customer's further competition. The capability assessment questions can only be answered by a supplier with a "yes" or "no" and only those suppliers answering yes to all of the capability questions can progress to the written stage of the further competition. The capability assessment is a means for a customer to further refine their shortlist of suppliers. Please see the capability assessment template on the CCS Spark webpage to give you an idea of the potential questions that could be included in this stage.</p>
<p>Will customers requirements be openly published like in DOS?</p>	<p>Customers need to invite all suppliers identified via their filter selection. All customers should also publish opportunities and contract details via ContractsFinder where appropriate. https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/procurement-policy-note-0716-legal-requirement-to-publish-on-contracts-finder</p> <p>The DPS does not use the Digital Marketplace for the call-off process but that may change in future.</p>
<p>Will the number of suppliers within each filter area be the same or will it vary?</p>	<p>There could be quite a few suppliers for AI but fewer for other areas. Customers are out there trying to promote this so we anticipate somewhere in the low 100s of suppliers in total, not 3,000 odd covered by GCloud. This is a different proposition and we after something quite specific.</p>
<p>Do buyers still need to complete a Procurement Regulations compliant competition?</p>	<p>Customers will need to complete a call-off in line with process described in Schedule 5 of the DPS Agreement.</p>

Can I direct award?	No you must follow the purchasing process detailed within the RM6094 Spark The Technology Innovation Marketplace Customer Guidance
What kind of financial due diligence has CCS done on suppliers on the RM6094 Spark The Technology Innovation Marketplace DPS and what do I need to do as a buyer?	We will undertake an assessment of a supplier's economic and financial standing using the DUNS number (as provided by Dun and Bradstreet) for their organisation which they input when registering on the SRS registration system at the following link: https://supplierregistration.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/organisation/register The report provided by the credit reference agency (Dun and Bradstreet) will be used to determine the level of financial risk the supplier represents. If the score provided by the credit reference agency is 60 or more, then their Request to participate will continue to proceed in the DPS Selection process. If the score is less than 60, further analysis of audited accounts will be undertaken before the supplier is awarded a place or not. If the risk is still too great, a supplier will be asked to provide a financial guarantor who will be subject to the same checks.
Where can I get a copy of the template contract order form and template contract terms for the RM6094 Spark The Technology Innovation Marketplace DPS?	You will find a copy of this both on the CCS Spark DPS Webpages or within the Supplier bid pack on the Supplier Registration Service
Can you have multiple suppliers for a given project? i.e. can customers select two of the bidders?	A customer may only award one call off contract to one successful supplier at the end of a further competition conducted through Spark, however if the successful supplier applied as part of a Group of Economic Operators, then the customer would be awarding to the group. A customer may choose to run several further competitions for one project to award different suppliers to deliver different elements of the project however.
AOB	
How is this linked to TP2 Lot 6 replacement?	It isn't - that will be a separate procurement.

Does this overlap with G-Cloud?	There maybe some small overlap as products are developed, we would expect SaaS products to mature and move onto G-Cloud more quickly than other product areas.
Will the slides be available?	We will publish slides and the Q&A. Unfortunately CCS's website is in the process of being migrated so it is likely to be early April before we can post the deck online