

INVITATION TO TENDER:

SECRETARIAT AND TECHNICAL COORDINATOR FUNCTIONS FOR YHRAF



1. Introduction

1.1 The Rural Affairs Forum for Yorkshire and The Humber (YHRAF) invites tenders from agencies, organisations and public sector authorities in the region in contracting to deliver Secretariat and technical support services, in accordance with the attached tender specification. . A copy of the tender specification can also be obtained from the RAF website - <http://www.yhraf.org.uk/> .

1.2 The contract will be initially for one year, with the possibility of additional years depending on the funding available and a review of performance and needs.

1.3 It would be much appreciated if those intending to tender could inform the RAF Chair - pandg@ivyhouse.karoo.co.uk [copied to Government Office – gareth.tracey@goyh.gsi.gov.uk].

1.4 The deadline for submission of tenders will be 12.00 am 30th September 2009. It is anticipated that interviews for shortlisted applicants will be held on XXX October It is hoped that the chosen applicant will be able to start as soon as possible thereafter.

1.5 All applicants will be informed of the outcome of the tender process appropriate tendering process will then follow.

2. Background

2.1 The Yorkshire and The Humber Rural Affairs Forum [YHRAF] is a group made up of the region's rural stakeholders who aim to represent to government at all levels the views and concerns of those on the receiving end of policies and service delivery as they apply in rural areas. The Forum provides feedback to authorities and organisations responsible for policy and service delivery and acts as a sounding board for new ideas. The Rural Affairs Forum was originally established in the Yorkshire and The Humber region as part of a rural governance structure designed in tandem with the Rural Framework to implement Defra's Rural Strategy 2004 and the modernising rural delivery agenda. It is currently funded by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra), Yorkshire Forward with additional support from partner bodies.

2.2 The Forum acts as an independent voice across a broad range of rural interests, challenging the public sector and organizations wherever they feel this is necessary to better respond to the needs and diverse circumstances of rural areas in Yorkshire and the Humber region. Further information about the Rural Affairs Forum can be found on the website at: www.yhraf.org.uk.

2.3 The Rural Affairs Forum is now entering a new phase following a review of rural governance arrangements and changes in overall regional governance structures as part of the Sub-National Review. This new phase will entail an enlarged Steering Group with a focus on supporting governance at all levels in taking forward the issues identified in the refreshed Rural Framework, 'Maximising the Rural Potential in Yorkshire & The Humber', (published July 2009). The Forum is looking to develop its role in offering independent expertise on rural matters in the region and to increase its activity in informing the development of policy and its delivery. This will require the services of a coordinator in addition to basic secretariat facilities and these two functions are the subject of this tender specification.



INVITATION TO TENDER

For

Providing the Secretariat and Technical Coordinator Functions for the
Yorkshire and The Humber Rural Affairs Forum

Issued by

GOVERNMENT OFFICE YORKSHIRE AND THE HUMBER

on behalf of

THE YORKSHIRE AND THE HUMBER RURAL AFFAIRS FORUM

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Rural Affairs Forum for Yorkshire and The Humber wishes to engage the services of suppliers to deliver the services and functions specified below.

2.0 THE TENDER SPECIFICATION

2.1 Background

2.1.1 The Yorkshire and The Humber Rural Affairs Forum [YHRAF] is a group made up of the region's rural stakeholders who aim to represent to government at all levels the views and concerns of those on the receiving end of policies and service delivery as they apply in rural areas. The Forum provides feedback to authorities and organisations responsible for policy and service delivery and acts as a sounding board for new ideas. The Rural Affairs Forum was originally established in the Yorkshire and The Humber region as part of a rural governance structure designed in tandem with the Rural Framework to implement Defra's Rural Strategy 2004 and the modernising rural delivery agenda. It is currently funded by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra), Yorkshire Forward with additional support from partner bodies.

2.1.2 The Forum acts as an independent voice across a broad range of rural interests, challenging the public sector and organizations wherever they feel this is necessary to better respond to the needs and diverse circumstances of rural areas in Yorkshire and the Humber region. Further information about the Rural Affairs Forum can be found on the website at: www.yhraf.org.uk.

2.1.3 The Rural Affairs Forum is now entering a new phase following a review of rural governance arrangements and changes in overall regional governance structures as part of the Sub-National Review. This new phase will entail an enlarged Steering Group with a focus on supporting governance at all levels in taking forward the issues identified in the refreshed Rural Framework, 'Maximising the Rural Potential in Yorkshire & The Humber', (published July 2009). The Forum is looking to develop its role in offering independent expertise on rural matters in the region and to increase its activity in informing the development of policy and its delivery. This will require the services of a coordinator in addition to basic secretariat facilities and these two functions are the subject of this tender specification.

2.1 Purpose and Aims

2.2.1 The overall aim of the secretariat and coordinator is to support the work of the Yorkshire and The Humber Rural Affairs Forum

2.3 Work Specification

2.3.1 Under the terms of the contract the provider will be expected to deliver two functions; coordinator and technical; and administrative. [This may be covered by one or two officer(s), see management section 2.5.1].

2.3.2 The specific details of each function and related skills and competences are described in Annex 1. below:

2.3.3 The RAF does not wish to preclude both coordinator and administrator functions being carried out by a single person if desired.

2.3.4 It is expected that the work above (both the coordinator and administrative functions) will equate to an average over the year of **2 days a week each** (i.e. 4 days in total), with the likelihood that the coordinator role will be nearer 2-3 days per week. Occasionally more

time may be needed and so some flexibility will be sought to allow for input to be increased on a call-off basis on an agreed hourly rate as the Chair and Steering Group feel necessary.

2.4 Management

2.4.1 The officer(s) carrying out the functions will work to a programme agreed with the Steering Group and communicate as necessary with the Chair on day to day matters. Whoever delivers the technical functions should also be responsible for coordinating the administrative functions if not carried out by the same person.

2.4.2 Performance criteria for all core tasks will be agreed by the Chair and the successful bidder before the new arrangements come into force.

2.5 Contract Commencement

2.5.1 Contracts to start from **October 2009**.

2.6 Contract Period

2.6.1 The initial contract will be for a fixed term of one year initially, subject to satisfactory progress and with appropriate clauses for review and renewal thereafter.

Tender bids should confirm the time frame on which costs have been calculated. Criteria for termination of the arrangement by either side will also be agreed by the Chair and the successful bidder before the new arrangements come into force

2.7 Location

2.7.1 The location from which the above secretariat functions will operate is flexible; it can, but does not have to be rural, but as the Rural Affairs Forum wishes to operate in accordance with sustainability principles, the chosen location should be accessible by public transport wherever possible to Leeds, where many of the key regional partners' offices are located.

2.8 Your Proposal

2.9.1 Your proposal should:

- demonstrate that you are able to deliver the 2 functions required in accordance with the requirements and criteria in Annex 1;
- detail the full costs of the work as described in paragraph 3.1.1 below

3.0 CONTENT OF TENDER

3.1 Tender details

3.1.1 The tender should be no longer than 10 sides of A4 sized paper in total including appendices in no less than 10 point font size and should include the following information:

- How the functions and related criteria will be met.
- Demonstration of appropriate skills for both functions.
- Number of officers required and their time allocation. Include details of qualifications and experience, resources, premises and equipment available. [nb. the Forum is seeking to develop a good working relationship and thus the performance criteria

referred to in 2.4.2 above are likely to include reasonable expectations around continuity of personnel and support].

- A suggested location for the work.
- Full cost of work per annum based on **3- 4 days work per week** (see 2.3.4)
- Breakdown of the costs by officer including hourly rate for any additional time required (as per 2.3.4).). Please state whether or not VAT has been included.
- Timeline for getting arrangements underway and any time factors needing to be considered.
- Details of past performance in the delivery of similar functions, including any references.

3.2 Tender assessment criteria

3.2.1 The tender will be evaluated using the following criteria:

- The extent to which the tender meets the specification requirements (weighting 20)
- Capacity to deliver including premises, resources and staff (weighting 20)
- Value for money (weighting 20)
- Previous experience/track record (weighting 15)
- Knowledge and experience of working on rural issues [coordinator only] (weighting 15)
- The quality of services and quality management arrangements including continuous improvement (weighting 10)

3.3 Additional Information

3.3.1 Any queries regarding the tender specification and its content can be made by contacting Gareth Tracey on 0113 341 2864 or Mike Feist on 0113 341 2699, by email to yhraf@goyh.gsi.gov.uk, or in writing to:

Yorkshire and The Humber Rural Affairs Forum
c/o Gareth Tracey

Government Office for Yorkshire and The Humber
Lateral
8 City Walk
Leeds
LS11 9AT

No charge will be made for the supply of any such information.

3.3.2 Any such queries should be made no later than **XX September 2009**

3.3.3 If, in the Rural Affairs Forum's judgement, any question and its answer affect the quality of information provided to all tenderers, questions and answers will be disseminated to all tenderers for information via the Rural Affairs Forum website, but the source of the questions will not be revealed.

4.0 SUBMISSION OF TENDER

4.1 Sign, date and submit the tender by 12:00 on **XX September 2009** to the postal address in paragraph 3.3.1.

4.2 Provide 2 copies of your tender proposal in one sealed envelope (one copy loose leaf, 1 copies bound or stapled). Please mark the envelope clearly with the words 'SEALED TENDER DO NOT OPEN – FAO Gareth Tracey'.

4.3 The tender is to remain open for acceptance by us for a period of 2 months from the date specified in paragraph 4.1.

5.0 ACCEPTANCE OF TENDER

5.1 Tenders not complying with this specification in any way may be rejected by the Rural Affairs Forum whose decision in this matter shall be final.

5.2 The Rural Affairs Forum is not bound to accept any, or the lowest price, tender.

5.3 The Rural Affairs Forum reserves the right to carry out financial due diligence on any tenderers.

5.4 The Rural Affairs Forum may invite tenderers for interview before coming to a final decision. Any interviews will be held in **September**/October

5.5 The Rural Affairs Forum will publish the outcome of the tendering on the Yorkshire and The Humber Rural Affairs Forum website www.yhraf.org.uk.

6.0 QUALITY COMMITMENT

6.1 The contractor must co-operate with the Rural Affairs Forum Contract Manager in all aspects of contract management and adhere to the quality requirements that will be agreed and specified in the contract.

Annex 1 YHRAF – Outline Specification for Services to be delivered by Contract.

These may be delivered as a package or separately subject to effective joint working arrangements.

1. Administrative Functions

- a. Support the RAF Chair by acting as first point of contact on administrative and communication matters.
- b. Circulate material, predominantly by e-mail, to RAF Steering Group and RAF as required, eg information from Chair and Steering Group members [mainly weekly]
- c. Consult, set agendas and minute the following meetings: RAF Steering Group (approx six times a year), full RAF meeting (approx three times year) and task and finish or ad hoc consultation meetings or events as required. Circulate minutes to appropriate membership following Chair's endorsement within agreed timescale.
- d. Organise venues, catering, equipment, transport, and all practical matters for meetings of the RAF in consultation with GOYH, RAF Steering Group, and ad hoc meetings
- e. Procure and purchase services at the direction of the RAF Chair in accordance with agreed financial procedures
- f. Maintain accounts for all income and expenditure by the RAF and provide reports as necessary.
- g. Routine website updates (adding links, minutes of meetings etc) through liaison with the current web administrator, Fenweb.

Skills and Competences

The skills and competences for undertaking this function should be self-evident and candidates will need to demonstrate organisational ability, experience with IT software and effective written and oral communication skills.

Note. The degree of delegation for some functions above- f and g for example - will be reviewed in consultation with whoever undertakes the coordinator function.

2. YHRAF Coordination and Technical Functions

- a. Coordinate engagement of rural stakeholders both from the YHRAF and elsewhere as appropriate, including agenda-setting for RAF meetings, and developing and servicing RAF Sub-Groups and task and finish groups, in consultation with the Chair, group Chairs and steering group as appropriate..
- b. Monitor and assess regional and national media for matters relevant to the aims and objectives of the YHRAF, recommend action points to the Chair and steering group and lead or coordinate as appropriate agreed action.

- c. Prepare, or assist YHRAF members in preparing briefing, consultation responses and papers on policy matters as appropriate for the Chair, the RAF Steering Group, the RAF, sub-regional rural partnerships and regional governance structures (eg. Sustainable Development Advisory Board and Thematic Boards) ensuring a consistent and high quality style.
- d. Initiate, develop and manage projects and events to take forward the aims of the Forum and its sub-groups in liaison with key partners.
- e. Represent YHRAF at relevant meetings and committees at sub-regional, regional and national level as appropriate.
- f. Review and implement a Communications Strategy for the YHRAF, covering both internal communications and promoting the work of YHRAF and the regional rural agenda to a wide range of stakeholders
- g. Undertake lead responsibility for the production, including editing, of Y&H RAF newsletter, "Rural Matters" (currently bi-monthly) and the development and management, including updates, of the YHRAF website to a high standard. (Note: some aspects of newsletter and website activity may be delegated or outsourced).
- h. Undertake lead responsibility for:
- monitoring agreed YHRAF procedures re elections, contract arrangements etc
 - in conjunction with the accountable body, drafting and managing YHRAF's budget in accordance with requirements set by funding bodies and reporting to the steering group.
 - Producing an annual report on YHRAF activities and interim updates for Defra in conjunction with GOYH
- i. Supervise and coordinate administrative functions listed under 1. above to the specified deadlines and professional standards.

Notes:

1. Prioritising work on the above functions and activities will be on the basis of a work programme agreed with the steering group, and on any necessary day to day issues with the Chair.
2. While the administrative and coordination functions above primarily relate to the Yorkshire and the Humber region, it is possible that another region may wish to share some functions. The feasibility and cost-effectiveness of this possible arrangement is currently being explored and, if agreed, would be incorporated into the work programme.

Skills and Competences

Applicants for undertaking this function should possess the following skills and competences:

- Educated to degree level in a discipline relevant to the YHRAF's work e.g. economic development, social sciences, geography, environment, planning.
- Knowledge and understanding of sustainable development, economic, social and environmental issues affecting rural areas.

- Understanding, and preferably experience, of the role, function and operation of regional and local government.
- Excellent demonstrable presentational, networking and reporting skills with an ability to communicate complex information at all levels and to a variety of audiences
- Good analytical skills and experience of policy work and research methodology.
- Drive, enthusiasm and the ability to be self motivated and to take the initiative where necessary to get things done.
- Willingness and ability to be a challenger and maintain a professional and independent position whilst still working effectively as a team player.
- Good interpersonal, and management skills including project management ability.
- Fully computer literate, and experience of using Windows-based IT systems.
- Able to work flexibly around the needs of the post and Forum partners.
- Be able to drive and use own transport.

Knowledge of the Yorkshire and the Humber region would be an advantage.

YHRAF

25th August 2009