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Notice

Competition document: Unmanned Air Systems in Urban Environments

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Contents

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1. Introduction

The Defence and Security Accelerator (DASA) and Defence Equipment and Support (DE&S) are seeking innovative technologies to enable Unmanned Air Systems (UAS) that will deliver tactical advantage and reduce threat to life for service personnel conducting operations in urban environments.

This cross-departmental requirement between DASA and DE&S (jointly referred to in this document as 'we') is designed for the rapid exploitation of technology and is the first of its kind. Since this differs from previous DASA calls, please read the contents of this document carefully to ensure you understand the process for applying.

This competition will be run using a framework agreement. As with all framework agreements, acceptance on the framework is not an automatic guarantee of work. We reserve the right to order less or none of the work under the framework.

To be considered for inclusion on the framework, tenderers must first complete the compulsory Pre-Qualification Questionnaire (PQQ) and Cyber Risk Assessment questionnaire, by Thursday 15 October at midday BST. Details of how to apply are found in Section 6.

Tenderers who pass both the PQQ and Cyber Risk Assessment will then be sent an Invitation To Tender (ITT) to get onto the framework. Tenderers must pass both the PQQ and Cyber Risk Assessment and provide an acceptable tender for one or more of Lots 1-3 in order to be accepted onto the framework.

For information purposes only, details of the specific requirements of each Phase are contained within this document at sections 2-3. We are not accepting proposals for either of the Phases during this pre-qualification stage.

This advert is being published in parallel on Defence Contracts Online (https://www.contracts.mod.uk/delta/project/buyer/displayNotice.html?type=DefenceContractNotice&id=89659281) (DCO). Please note you will need a DCO account in order to view this advert.

2. Competition Scope

2.1 Background

UAS have the potential to deliver a significant increase in military capability, beyond image capture, to include deployment of weaponry. Commercially-available small UAS have already been used overseas, by forces hostile to UK interests, to deploy cheap, low-observable, armed capability across the battlefield. The UK therefore wishes to advance military capability through tactical weaponised UAS, specifically to reduce threat to life for UK forces operating in urban areas.

The complex and high-risk urban environment is predicted to provide the main terrain in which forces will be required to operate in the near future. Features such as high obstacles, urban canyons and enclosed spaces generate a complex electromagnetic environment for Position Navigation and Timing. UAS platforms therefore need to operate without the reliance on GPS that is typical on small UAS.

The urban environment also has a mix of internal spaces. These range from compact (such as those designed as residential dwellings) to large open building complexes (similar to shopping centres or stadiums). These covered operating spaces limit the employment of traditional combat capabilities, such as artillery or air power. The urban environment is also often associated with river or coastal features that limit personnel movement. Manoeuvrability is limited further when rubble is present. The employment of UAS would support forces by overcoming some of the challenges associated with this environment, providing a tactical advantage that would ultimately protect service personnel.

For this competition, we are seeking new and emerging technologies, systems and techniques that could enable weaponised urban-optimised UAS. This competition will show how UK industry and academia (in collaboration, where appropriate) can work with the Defence Science and Technology Laboratory (Dstl) and DE&S to demonstrate and rapidly deliver new military capability through the exploitation of emerging and innovative technologies.

2.2 Scope

The framework will run in two phases.

Phase 1: DASA

Phase 1 will be run by DASA and aims to develop three technology areas up to Technology Readiness Level (https://www.gov.uk/guidance/defence-and-security-accelerator-terms-and-conditions-and-contract-guidance#what-dasa-funds) (TRL) 6:

- Lot 1: Urban-optimised UAS (platform systems)
- Lot 2: Lethal payloads under human control (payload systems)
- Lot 3: Urban-optimised UAS with lethal payloads under human control (fully-integrated systems)

When Phase 1 has concluded, DASA will hand over the running of the remainder of the framework (Phase 2) to the Future Capability Group (FCG) at DE&S.

Tenderers who have solutions that are already at or above TRL 6 must complete the requirements of this advert and must submit a proposal for Lot 3 to be accepted on to the framework. They will not be invited to compete for work until Phase 2 commences, as funding is not available for mature technologies (TRL 6 and above) until Phase 2.

The total funding available for Phase 1 is £900k, with individual proposals not to exceed £150k (ex. VAT) for each of the Lots. If successful, contracts must complete within 90 days of contract placement, with a demonstration to be held (either in the UK or virtually for international suppliers, COVID situation-dependent) within this time-frame.

Proposals for funding to meet one of the Phase 1 Lots must be submitted by Friday 4 December 2020 at midday GMT, also via the DASA submission service. Please note that this is an indicative date, and will be confirmed when you are invited to tender.

Further guidance on submitting a proposal (https://www.gov.uk/guidance/defence-and-security-accelerator-how-to-submit-a-proposal) for Phase 1 is available on the DASA website. Please note that for this competition we will NOT be using the DASA standard terms and conditions as given on the website – this competition will be using a bespoke contract that will be sent out with the invitation to tender.

Phase 2: DE&S

Phase 2 will comprise of a series of competitions (spirals) which will be restricted to companies within the framework. The information gained from each spiral will inform subsequent spiral requirements. Each spiral seeks to purchase, trial and test integrated systems, or to potentially integrate separate platform and payload systems. It is anticipated that Phase 2 will commence after April 2021. Phase 2 will be run by DE&S.

Joining the framework will enable suppliers to receive headline results from the Phase 2 spirals irrespective of whether their products were directly involved. Proprietary information will not be shared without prior consent of the relevant companies.

3. Phase 1 Lots

The three Lots are focused on providing a robust cost-effective armed UAS system that is either integrated, or has the potential to be integrated and demonstrated, as a full system in a representative urban test environment. Those successful at PQQ stage will be invited to tender for any of the three Lots.

The budget for Phase 1 is £900k (ex. VAT) and the budget for each tender under Phase 1 is £150k (ex. VAT). Tenderers who have integrated solutions that are already at or above TRL 6 must complete the PQQ and submit a proposal for Lot 3 to be considered for acceptance onto the framework. You will not be invited to compete for work until Phase 2 commences as funding is not available for mature technologies (TRL 6 and above) until Phase 2. More than one company may win each Lot.

3.1 Lot 1: Urban-optimised UAS (when formally invited to do so, tenderers will be able to bid for this challenge)

This Lot is focused on providing a robust cost-effective platform element of an armed UAS system. DASA is looking for a UAS platform that has the potential to be integrated and demonstrated as a full system in a representative urban test environment. We are interested in UAS technologies that provide:

- the ability to observe and target threats and - maintaining ‘human-in-the-loop’ engagement - activate a payload
- options to mount different payloads to allow flexibility in mission configuration, so the user is able to match the payload to the tactical situation
- reduction in operator burden in this complex environment. Note that, whilst we would consider systems that incorporate AI elements for assisting in flight and weapon usage, the system must remain fully under human control throughout the system’s use. Specifically, the AI will not control the activation of the payload
- the ability to restrict access to mission data which includes positional, temporal or video information to only MOD, the supplier of the UAS and potentially the supplier of the payload

We are interested in proposals that will deliver at least one prototype UAS platform that is able to meet or exceed the following minimum standards:

- all-up mass of less than 10 kg (allowing light troops to employ the system)

- capability to transition from flight in an open urban area to inside a building, through a horizontal gap of 762 mm
- flight time of at least 20 minutes
- provision to fit a payload of at least 1.5 kg on a rail that is compliant with either the Picatinny rail (MIL-STD-1913 or STANAG 2324) or the NATO accessory rail standard (STANAG 4694)
- ability to provide own illumination in no light conditions in order to fly in controlled manner, and preferably allow the detection of potential targets at 12 metre range
- into-action speed (time from inserting battery, conducting internal checks, flying away under operator-control) less than 2 minutes
- enables operator to remotely identify target via the UAS camera
- provision of remote viewing capability for optional third-party observation
- enables operator to aim the platform (or just the Picatinny rail or NATO accessory rail) at the target
- provision of a power feed and a firing signal for attached payload. Suppliers may use own standards for control of firing signal, but should be prepared share the interface control documentation with MOD (see Section 3.4)
- firing control signal must be on a separate frequency to the flight control frequency of the craft
- provision of a fail-safe approach, so that on loss of communication signal the system will immediately hold position and, after a user-specified time period, either return to the launch position or land in its current location
- provision of a kill switch to allow an operator to immediately disable the UAS if it enters an unsafe flying configuration, preferably forcing the craft to land immediately
- allows operator to switch batteries without use of tools
- MUST NOT provide a firing signal to the payload without an explicit command to do so from the user

The features of this platform are critical to ensuring delivery of 'human-in-the-loop' interaction when making the final decision on payload activation.

Since the interaction between this platform and payload has not yet been defined, we are interested in proposals that provide a standard interface for internally-supplied power and firing control signals.

It is noted that any future development would require compliance with MOD assurance process.

3.2 Lot 2: Lethal payloads under human control (when formally invited to do so, tenderers will be able to bid for this challenge)

This challenge is focused on providing a lethal payload that could be integrated with a UAS platform, as outlined in Lot 1. We are interested in payload technologies that provide:

- capability to integrate with different platforms to allow flexibility in mission configuration
- delivery of lethal force, without destruction of the platform, to allow post-engagement assessment
- ability to be rapidly reloaded and resupplied in an urban combat environment
- ability to be controlled and initiated from a UAS platform, such as that sought in Lot 1
- ability to restrict access to mission data - which includes positional, temporal or video information - to only MOD, the supplier of the UAS, and potentially the supplier of the payload

In this Lot we are interested in proposals that will deliver a lethal payload that is able to meet the following minimum standards:

- lethal effect out to 12m, with particular interest in effectiveness at this distance
- delivery of lethal force to within a 7.5cm radius of the original point of aim
- preferably, a minimum of 5 rounds munition capacity
- between-shot period to be as low as possible
- payload maximum weight of 1.5 kg (depending on submissions for Lot 1, potential to increase to 2 kg)
- ability to be attached to the UAS platform via a rail that is compliant with either Picatinny rail (MIL-STD-1913 or STANAG 2324) or the NATO accessory rail standard (STANAG 4694)
- allows an operator to engage and initiate the payload via a UAS firing control signal. Suppliers may use own standards for control of firing signal, but should be prepared share the interface control documentation with MOD (see Section 3.4)
- provision of a fail-safe approach such that, on loss of control signal or power, the payload will be placed in a safe mode
- provision of a disable signal to allow an operator to immediately disable the payload if the operator detects unsafe configuration for either platform or payload. The signal for disable control signal must be on a separate frequency to the firing control frequency of the payload.

We are particularly interested in payloads that deliver lethality based on munitions that have already been assured for military or law enforcement service. Novel munitions will also be considered.

It is noted that any future development would require compliance with MOD assurance process.

3.3 Lot 3: Urban-optimised UAS with lethal payloads under human control (when formally invited to do so, tenderers will be able to bid for this challenge)

This challenge is focused on providing a robust cost-effective platform with an integrated lethal payload, demonstrating an armed UAS system. This will integrate solutions such as those sought in Lots 1 and 2. We are interested in systems that

provide:

- ability to observe and target threats and - maintaining 'human-in-the-loop' engagement - activate a payload
- reduction in operator burden in this complex environment. Note that, whilst we would consider systems that incorporate AI elements for assisting in flight and weapon usage, the system must remain fully under human control throughout the system's use. Specifically, the AI will not control the activation of the payload
- delivery of lethal force, without destruction of the platform, to allow post-engagement assessment
- ability to be rapidly reloaded and resupplied in an urban combat environment
- ability to restrict access to mission data - which includes positional, temporal or video information - to only MOD, and the supplier of the system

We are interested in proposals that would deliver at least one integrated lethal payload on a UAS that is able to meet the following minimum standards:

- all-up mass of less than 10 kg (allowing light troops to employ the system)
- capability to transition from flight in an open urban area to inside a building, through a horizontal gap of 762 mm
- flight time of at least 20 minutes
- ability to provide own illumination in no light conditions in order to fly in controlled manner, and preferably allow the detection of potential targets at 12 metre range
- into-action speed (time from inserting battery, conducting internal checks, flying away under operator-control) less than 2 minutes
- allows operator to switch batteries without use of tools
- enables operator to remotely identify target via the UAS camera
- provision of remote viewing capability for optional third-party observation
- enables operator to aim the platform and lethal payload
- delivery of lethal effect out to 12m, with particular interest in effectiveness at this distance
- delivery of lethal force to within a 7.5cm radius of the original point of aim
- preferably, a minimum of 5 rounds munition capacity
- between-shot period to be as low as possible
- allows an operator to engage and initiate the payload via a UAS firing control signal. Suppliers may use own standards for control of firing signal, but should be prepared to share the interface control documentation with MOD (see Section 3.4)
- provision of a fail-safe approach, so that on loss of communication signal the system will immediately hold position and, after a user-specified time period, either return to the launch position or land in its current location
- provision of a fail-safe approach such that, on loss of control signal or power, the payload will be placed in a safe mode
- provision of a kill switch to allow an operator to immediately disable the UAS if it enters an unsafe flying configuration, preferably to force the craft to land immediately

- provision of a disable signal to allow an operator to immediately disable the payload if the operator detects unsafe configuration for either platform or payload. This signal must be on a separate frequency to the firing control frequency of the payload
- firing control signal must be on a separate frequency to the flight control frequency of the craft
- MUST NOT provide a firing signal to the payload without an explicit command to do so from the user

The features of this platform are critical to ensuring delivery of 'human-in-the-loop' interaction when making the final decision on payload activation.

Since the interaction between this platform and payload has not yet been defined, we are interested in proposals that provide a standard interface for internally-supplied power and firing control signals.

It is noted that any future development would require compliance with MOD assurance process.

3.4 Intellectual Property

In order to develop a capability that is flexible and available for research, development, and exploitation, it is necessary to ensure that Government has the ability and permissions to conduct further research and exploit anything that has been developed. Proprietary information that suppliers already own, they shall retain. Any reports/data generated during the initial framework will vest with the suppliers, with the MOD securing full user rights (in accordance with Intellectual Property (IP) condition DEFCON 705). Proprietary information in any Interface Control Documentation (ICD) generated under the framework shall be owned by the MOD (in accordance with IP condition DEFCON 703). This is due to the likelihood of this being developed into a standard. If it is necessary for the ICD to include background proprietary information, the supplier must be willing to provide or secure a licence for the MOD to use that information to meet the MOD's requirements for the ICD (which must include publication). All reports of the efficacy or operation of systems developed during Phase 2 will be owned by the MOD.

3.5 Clarification of what we want tenderers to demonstrate when bidding for the Lots (when formally invited to do so)

We want novel ideas to benefit users working in UK Defence and Security. Your proposal should include evidence of:

- proof-of-concept research which demonstrates potential for translation to practical demonstration
- an innovative or creative approach
- either demonstration of integration or a plan for future integration ensuring that the solution proposed could be integrated with the other respective element
- a plan to achieve compliance with any outlined MOD assurance processes and standards
- for Lots 2 and 3, a mechanism to safely demonstrate the lethal payload

3.6 Clarification of what we don't want tenderers to demonstrate when bidding for the Lots (when formally invited to do so)

We are not interested in proposals that:

- constitute consultancy, paper-based studies or literature reviews which summarise the existing literature without any view of future innovation
- are an identical resubmission of a previous bid to DASA or MOD, without modification
- offer no real long-term prospect of integration into defence and security capabilities
- offer no real prospect of out-competing existing technological solutions
- proposals that cannot demonstrate feasibility within the required timescales
- offer highly bespoke or crude integration options

3.7 Phase 2 'Buy and Try at Scale' (BATS) Spirals Summary

Phase 2 will comprise a series of competitions (spirals) which will be restricted to companies within the framework. The information gained from each spiral informs subsequent spiral requirements. Each spiral will seek to purchase, trial and test integrated platform-payload systems, as well as some separate systems which have the potential to be integrated.

Mature technologies (TRL 6 and above) will be more likely to win spiral competitions. It is anticipated that Phase 2 will commence after April 2021. We are yet to confirm the specific details of Phase 2, as the users' specific requirements are under development.

Headline results from each spiral will be shared with all framework contractors, irrespective of whether their products were directly involved. Proprietary information will not be shared without prior consent of the relevant companies.

The framework will be re-opened on an annual basis for any companies who want to join the framework in the future. Successful bidders will also need to pass a PQQ and Cyber Risk Assessment to be allowed onto the framework. New contractors will not be given any information on the spirals that were released before they joined the framework.

4. Exploitation

Phase 1 will only fund technology which has the potential to reach TRL 6 on completion. Phase 2 will focus primarily on TRL 6 and above, with the goal to move concepts rapidly to full exploitation.

All proposals to DASA should articulate the expected development in technology maturity of the potential solution over the contract and how this relates to improved operational capability against the current known (or presumed) baseline. DASA Innovation Partners are available to support you with defence and security context.

You may wish to include some of the following information, where known, to help the assessors understand your exploitation plans to date:

- the intended defence or security users of your final product and whether you have previously engaged with them, their procurement arm or their research and development arm

- awareness of, and alignment to, any existing end-user procurement programmes
- the anticipated benefits (for example, in cost, time, improved capability) that your solution will provide to the user
- whether it is likely to be a standalone product or integrated with other technologies or platforms
- additional future applications and wider markets for exploitation
- wider collaborations and networks you have already developed or any additional relationships you see as a requirement to support exploitation
- requirements for access to external assets, including Government Furnished Assets (GFA) - for example, information, equipment, materials and facilities
- any specific legal, ethical, commercial or regulatory considerations for exploitation

5. Security

It is necessary for all contractors' personnel on the framework to pass Baseline Personal Security Standard (BPSS) checks. During the ITT for Phase 1, suppliers will be asked to provide information to enable BPSS checks to be conducted. Failure to provide BPSS information on request will exclude a supplier from participating further in the competition. Equally, if staff fail the BPSS checks, the supplier will be excluded from participating further.

In addition, it will be necessary for at least one member of the contractors' personnel working on the framework under Phase 2 to pass Security Check (SC) clearance. Failure to ensure their staff are SC cleared by 1 April 2021 will mean that the supplier will not be eligible to tender for the Phase 2 Spirals and will not receive the headline outputs of the spirals. Please note that 1 April 2021 is an indicative date, and it may be later (but it will not be earlier).

Details of the security vetting clearance levels are available here (https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/united-kingdom-security-vetting-clearance-levels/national-security-vetting-clearance-levels).

6. How to apply to join the framework

To be considered for inclusion on the framework, tenderers must first complete the compulsory Pre-Qualification Questionnaire (PQQ) and Cyber Risk Assessment questionnaire.

PQQ: The PQQ is found at Annex A (https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/917682/Annex_A_-_Pre-Qualification_Questionnaire.odt). Please download and complete this document, and submit via the DASA submission service (for which you will be required to register (https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/defence-and-security-accelerator-submit-your-research-proposal)) as an attachment.

Cyber Risk Assessment: This competition has a cyber-risk level of Very Low and as such, suppliers must submit a Supplier Assurance Questionnaire (SAQ) on the Supplier Cyber Protection Portal (https://supplier-cyber-protection.service.gov.uk/). The SAQ allows suppliers to demonstrate compliance with the specified risk level and the corresponding profile in Def Stan 05-138, the levels of controls required will depend on this risk level.

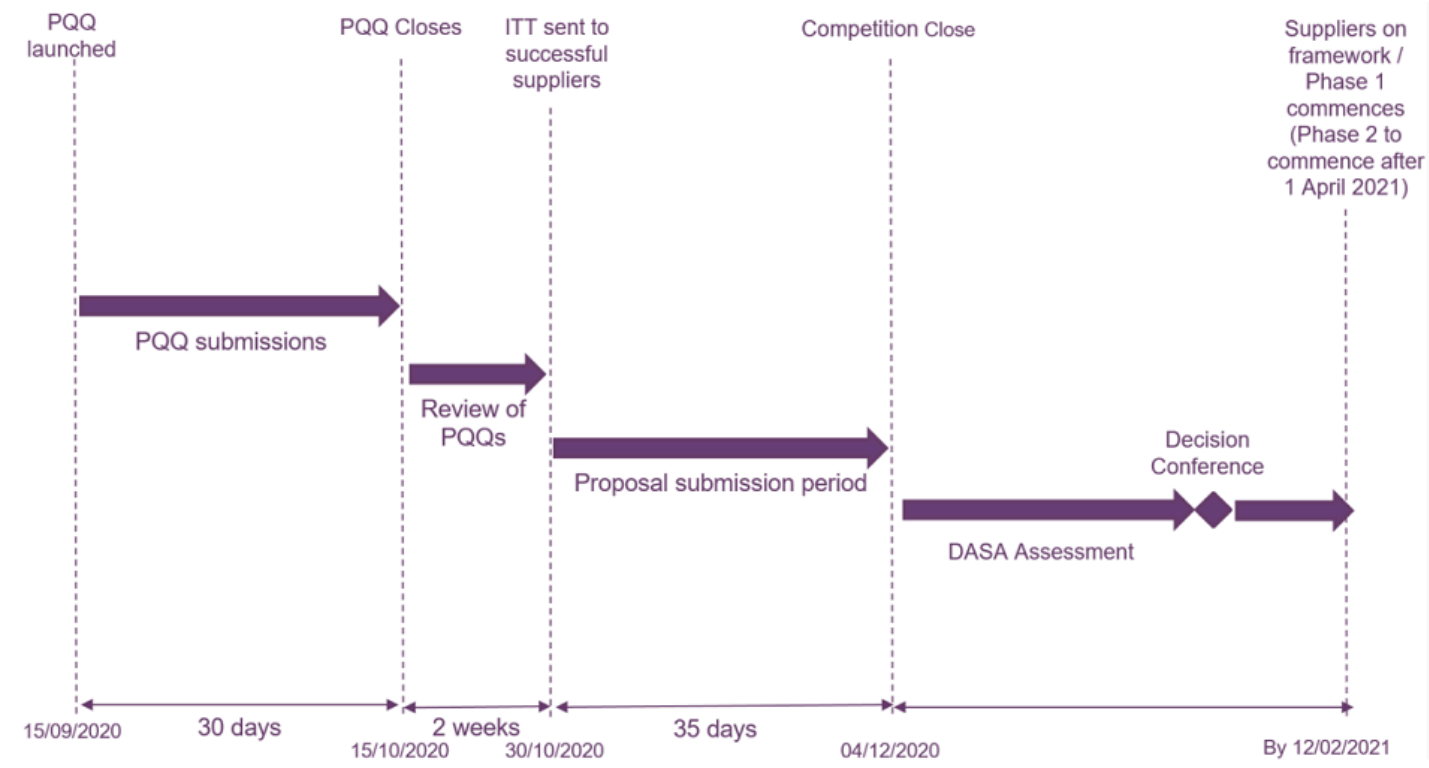
Suppliers should create an account in the Supplier Cyber Protection Portal if they do not already have one, and will be able to find the corresponding SAQ to the requirement by searching the Risk Assessment Reference (RAR) for this competition: RAR-FKK58YP9.

Further guidance can be found at DCPP: Cyber Security Model industry buyer and supplier guide (https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/dcpp-cyber-security-model-industry-buyer-and-supplier-guide).

Suppliers should complete both the PQQ and Cyber Risk Assessment by Thursday 15 October 2020 at midday BST.

Tenderers who do not complete and submit the PQQ and Cyber Risk Assessment in full by the deadline will be considered non-compliant and will not be invited either to join the framework or to tender for work under the framework.

The following diagram shows the application process. Please note that some dates (post-PQQ submission closure) are indicative.



6.1 What your proposal must include (when tenderers are formally invited to bid into Phase 1)

When submitting a proposal, you must complete all sections of the online form, including an appropriate level of technical information to allow assessment of the bid and a completed finances section. Completed proposals must comply with the financial rules set for this competition. The upper-limit for Phase 1 is £150k (ex. VAT) for each submission. Proposals will be rejected if the financial cost exceeds this capped level. It is also helpful to include a list of other current or recent government funding you may have received in this area if appropriate, making it clear how this proposal differs from this work.

A project plan with clear milestones and deliverables must be provided. Deliverables must be well defined and designed to provide evidence of progress against the project plan and the end-point for this phase and must include a final report. The final report must contain (as a minimum):

- The technical progress made during the contract, analysis of any testing and/or demonstration, and conclusions
- Future work: estimation of time and effort to take the initial project to a level suitable for commercial offering, plus any potential difficulties associated with commercialising the solution (such as challenges associated with training or infrastructure for a fully-military solution)
- Consideration of the targeting aspect (anticipating that the targeting function would sit with the platform, however there might be targeting elements that are associated and linked to the payload)
- Definitions of any interfaces that facilitate integration with a payload (for Lot 1), with a platform (for Lot 2), or both (Lot 3)

You should plan for attendance at a kick-off meeting at the start of the project and a demonstration event (held either in the UK for British suppliers or virtually for international suppliers, COVID situation-dependent), as well as regular reviews with the appointed Technical Partner and Project Manager. Your proposal must demonstrate how you will complete all activities/services and provide all deliverables within the competition timescales (90 days). Proposals with any deliverables (including final report) outside the competition timeline will be rejected as non-compliant.

A resourcing plan must be provided that identifies, where possible, the nationalities of those proposed research workers that you intend working on this phase. In the event of proposals being recommended for funding, DASA will undertake due diligence checks including the clearance of proposed Research Workers. Please note that in order to complete this process in time, you are asked to provide any further details as soon as requested as part of the commercial clarification process.

Due to project duration, we are unable to accept any proposals that require MODREC approval. For more information on ethical / legal / regulatory factors (https://www.gov.uk/guidance/defence-and-security-accelerator-ethical-legal-and-regulatory-guidance) please see the DASA guidance. If you are still unsure if your proposal would require MODREC approval, please contact DASA for further guidance.

Requirements for access to Government Furnished Assets (GFA), for example, information, equipment, materials and facilities, should be included in your proposal. We cannot guarantee that GFA will be available.

Failure to provide any of the above listed will automatically render your proposal non-compliant.

6.2 Public facing information

When submitting your proposal, you will be required to include a proposal title and a short abstract. The title and abstract you provide will be used by DASA, and other government departments, to describe the project and its intended outcomes and benefits. It will be used for inclusion at DASA events in relation to this competition and

included in documentation such as brochures. The proposal title will also be published in the DASA transparency data on GOV.UK, along with your company name, the amount of funding, and the start and end dates of your contract.

6.3 How your proposal will be assessed (when tenderers are formally invited to bid into Phase 1)

All proposals will be checked for compliance with this document and may be rejected before full assessment if they do not comply. Only those proposals who demonstrate their compliance against the competition scope and DASA mandatory criteria will be taken forward to full assessment. Failure to achieve full compliance will render your proposal non-compliant and will not be considered any further.

Mandatory criteria

The proposal outlines how it meets the scope of the competition	Within scope (Pass) / Out of scope (Fail)
The proposal fully explains in all three sections of the DASA submission service how it meets the DASA criteria	Pass / Fail
The proposal clearly details a financial plan, a project plan and a resourcing plan to complete the work proposed	Pass / Fail
The proposal confirms that MODREC approval is not needed	Pass / Fail
The proposal identifies any GFA required	Pass / Fail
Maximum value of proposal is £150k (ex. VAT)	Pass / Fail
The proposal demonstrates how all research and development activities/services will be completed within 90 days of contract award (or less)	Pass / Fail
The proposal includes costed participation at a kick-off meeting, and a demonstration event	Pass / Fail
The tenderer has obtained the authority to provide unqualified acceptance of the terms and conditions of the Contract	Pass / Fail

Proposals that pass the above will then be assessed against the standard DASA assessment criteria (https://www.gov.uk/guidance/defence-and-security-accelerator-how-your-proposal-is-assessed) (Desirability, Feasibility, Viability) by subject matter experts from the MOD (including Dstl), other government departments and front-line military commands. You will not have the opportunity to comment on assessors' comments.

DASA reserves the right to disclose on a confidential basis any information it receives from you during the procurement process to any third party engaged by DASA for the specific purpose of evaluating or assisting DASA in the evaluation of your proposal. For the specific purposes of considering additional funding for a competition and onward

exploitation opportunities, DASA also reserves the right to share information in your proposal in-confidence with any UK Government Department. In providing such information you consent to such disclosure. Appropriate confidentiality agreements will be put in place.

Further guidance on how your proposal is assessed is available on the DASA website.

After assessment, proposals will be discussed internally at a Decision Conference where, based on the assessments, budget and wider strategic considerations, a decision will be made on the proposals that are recommended for funding.

Proposals that are unsuccessful will receive brief feedback after the Decision Conference.

7. Things you should know about the contract

7.1 General

This procurement will take the form of a framework contract which will use Standardised Contracting Template 2 (conditions (https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/917683/SC2_Conditions_Template.pdf) and schedules (https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/917684/SC2_Schedules_Template.pdf)) as a basis for the contract and the final version will include additional bespoke and standard terms and conditions. The final version will be sent to tenderers whose application to join the framework is considered successful in accordance with this document.

7.2 Phase 1

Funded projects under Phase 1 will be allocated a Project Manager (to run the project) and a Technical Partner (as a technical point of contact). In addition, the DASA team will work with you to support delivery and exploitation including, where appropriate, introductions to end-users and business support to help SMEs develop their business.

DASA also collects information from projects after the project has concluded and you should expect to be contacted once your project has completed for measurement and feedback purposes.

For Phase 1, a total of £900k is currently available to fund proposals. There may be occasions where additional funding from other funding lines may subsequently become available to allow us to revisit those proposals deemed suitable for funding but where limitations on funding at the time prevented DASA from awarding a subsequent contract. In such situations, DASA reserves the right to keep such proposals in reserve. In the event that additional funding subsequently becomes available, DASA may ask whether you would still be prepared to undertake the work outlined in your proposal under the same terms.

8. Dates

Deadline to submit PQQ and Cyber Risk Assessment	Thursday 15 October 2020 at midday BST
Notification of outcome of requests to join the framework	Friday 30 October 2020

and competition open to submissions (indicative date)	
Pre-bookable 1-1 telecon sessions (indicative date)	Thursday 12 November
Deadline for submission of tenders for Lots 1-3 (indicative date)	Friday 4 December 2020 at midday GMT
Framework contract starts (indicative date)	Friday 12 February 2021
Lots 1-3 awarded (indicative date)	Aim to start Friday 12 February 2021 and end 90 days later
Phase 2 commences - first spiral awarded	TBC - after 1 April 2021

We will advise tenderers of any changes to the indicative dates.

9. Help

9.1 PQQ Stage

Please note that the we will only provide minimal information on the requirement at this stage and ahead of release of the invitation to submit proposals for each Lot, but any questions deemed as requiring a response will be anonymised and the answers will be published at Annex B (https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/917681/Annex_B_-_Supplier_Q_A_-_v1.odt) and Defence Contracts Online for all tenderers to see. Clarification questions on the PQQ should be sent to accelerator@dstl.gov.uk, quoting the competition title.

9.2 ITT Stage

DASA has a network of regionally based Innovation Partners who are available to provide guidance to suppliers on submitting to a competition. If you would like guidance on process, application, technical, commercial and intellectual property aspects, please contact us via the DASA website (https://www.gov.uk/guidance/contact-a-dasa-innovation-partner). This will be sent to an Innovation Partner who will contact you within ten working days to discuss.

DASA will host a series of 20 minute one-to-one teleconference sessions, giving you the opportunity to ask questions on how to respond to the advert. Details of how to register will be sent out during the ITT phase. Clarification questions on the requirement itself should be sent to accelerator@dstl.gov.uk, quoting the competition title.

While all reasonable efforts will be made to answer queries, DASA reserves the right to impose management controls if volumes of queries restrict fair access of information to all potential suppliers.

If you are experiencing technical difficulties with the submission service, please contact accelerator@dstl.gov.uk.