

cOAlition S

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Building a service to support cOAlition S's Price & Service Transparency Frameworks: an Invitation to Tender



Webinar/Q&A with potential suppliers: 13 May 2021

Ref	Theme	Question	Answer
1	Technical	The document states "user access is validated by some third party". Who is this third party?	<p>As specified in Section 2.3 of the ITT the cOAlition S Office will work with third parties -- such as ESAC - to identify users who would have a valid reason to access the system as an authorised user. We are open to Suppliers suggesting alternative workflows and processes but we envisage the process could work as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) cOAlition S office contacts the ESAC administrator to determine which library consortium members would like access to the service. b) ESAC responds to the cOAlition S office indicating that the following organisations would like access c) Via the PSTF system, the cOAlition S office invites the user to register with service -- probably by clicking a link which associates the application with an approved user d) Approved user registers and sets their password etc.
2	Operational	Can you elaborate a bit more on the role you see for the cOAlition S office? Is this just a checkbox in an admin console, or is there more?	See response to q1. We hope successful supplier will work with us to streamline and make this as straightforward as possible.

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3	Operational	Which legal entity will be the contract party for supplier? Which legal entity will be the contract party for any publisher that wishes to deposit data?	The European Science Foundation (ESF) will be the party responsible for awarding any contract. See: https://www.esf.org/ ESF will be the contract party for any publisher that wishes to deposit data.
4	Budget	What will be the economic/funding model for continuity of the service after the initial years?	The PSTF service will initially be funded by the cOAlition partners. Over time, and working on the assumption that the service will be deemed to be useful by a range of stakeholders, we would hope that we could move to a model where the costs are shared. Any multi-funding funding model that is developed will NOT be part of the system we are currently seeking to procure.
5	Technical	Does cOAlition S already have a hosting partner, or are you open to using a Cloud Services provider as suggested by the supplier? (Part A)	No, cOAlition S does not have a hosting partner. We would be open to using Cloud Services and would invite suppliers to provide rational/justification for any solution they recommend.
6	Technical	Are cOAlition S open to Managed Services being part of the overall delivered solution, which would mean that element of the service is not open source. (Part B)	Yes, we are happy for Suppliers to suggest a solution which makes use of Managed Services. Regarding the open source requirement, this only applies to code which is written under the contract awarded to support the PSTF service. To be clear, if the solution makes use of a commercial product (e.g. MSSQL or ORACLE database) we fully recognise that those elements will not be available under an open source licence.
7	General Requirements Clarification	Is there a requirement to provide this service in multiple languages i.e. the solution must facilitate internationalisation of the content / labels etc.	No, this is not a requirement. The ITT however, encourages suppliers to suggest ways in which the service could be further developed to make it more useful. Any additional elements which are developed must be costed separately (in the price template).
8	Technical	ISSN: is it enough to validate them using the check digit validation or do we need to validate that the ISSN actually exists by interfacing with issn.org?	We do not have an opinion on this. Suppliers are invited to outline the options - along with a recommendation as to which option is preferred and why. If different options incur different costs, then the alternative options should be costed separately in the price template.

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9	Technical	DOIs: it is enough to validate the format (10.xxxx/id) or do we need to look at options to check that the DOI exists?	We do not have an opinion on this. Suppliers are invited to outline the options - along with a recommendation as to which option is preferred and why. If different options incur different costs, then the alternative options should be costed separately in the price template.
10	Technical	RORs, do you expect the system to interface with ror.org to validate the identifier?	We do not have an opinion on this. Suppliers are invited to outline the options - along with a recommendation as to which option is preferred and why. If different options incur different costs, then the alternative options should be costed separately in the price template.
11	Technical	If interfaces are expected, we assume that the system could validate that those identifiers belong to the editor providing the information & reject it otherwise	We do not understand the question. Please reframe and resubmit.
12	General Requirements Clarification	Would we ever need to prevent access to a single publisher (or set of publishers) by a specific user account (e.g. if there is a conflict of interest)	On depositing data, publishers will be asked to agree to set of terms (to be defined) making it clear that authorised users can access these data. As such authorised users will be able to access these data. No provision has been made to accommodate a use case when some authorised users can access the data, but others cannot.
13	Technical	If we use our existing proprietary technology to accelerate the delivery is it acceptable to release to OS only new code developed outside our existing platform	Yes. As specified above (q6) the open source requirement only applies to code which is written under the contract awarded to support the PSTF service. To be clear, if the solution makes use of code previously developed there is no expectation that this code will be made available under an open source licence.
14	Budget	What is the budget?	No budget figure has been publicly stated. We expect Suppliers to determine what it will cost to build and support the PSTF. Part of the published evaluation criteria (Annex B) makes it clear that value for money will be used (in part) when scoring supplier bids.
15	Technical	URLs are expected, if available, for three fields. Do you plan to structure this information further to allow	We do not have an opinion on this. Suppliers are invited to outline the options - along with a recommendation as to which option is preferred and why. If different options incur different

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		easy comparison among different entries?	costs, then the alternative options should be costed separately in the price template.
16	Operational	Have you any IT knowledge and experience inside cOAlition S to be able to evaluate the offers?	Yes.
17	Technical	How do you expect to compare journals providing information based on different frameworks?	This question form part of the ITT (see Section 4). We invite Suppliers to outline how they might work to resolve this, given that the Information Power framework collects data at the journal level and the Fair Open Access Alliance collects data at the publisher level.
18	Legal	Will you waive legal liability if by any chance the publishers do get insights into their competition offerings	Legal liabilities will form part of the contract with the successful supplier.
19	Comment	Budget: as vendors we put a lot of effort into bids. We need to assess whether there is sufficient funding for what we think it will cost us.	As made clear in the response to q14, no budget figure has been publicly stated. Suppliers are at liberty to submit a response (or not) as they see fit.
20	Technical	What is meant by 'user access validation by a third party'? Is a 'third party' comparable to DiGID / e-herkenning in the Netherlands ?	Please see the response to q1.
21	Comment	Are Diamond journals subject to the PSTF requirements?	cOAlition S has determined that from 1st July 2022, only those publishers who adhere to at least one of the approved Frameworks (and provide these data to the service are seeking to procure) will be eligible to receive funds from cOAlition S members. This covers funder contributions to any model of financing open access publications including, but not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• APCs• Transformative Agreements• Transformative Journals• Non-APC journals or platforms The requirements relating to the PSTF only apply in cases where the publisher has If no fees are levied (as per Diamond) then the

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			<p>publisher is not required to supply data inline with one of the approved PSTF. Of course, we would still encourage a publisher to participate in the PSTF service and make their data available, but there would be no requirement to do so.</p>
22	Technical	Which criteria do you have with respect to IT security? please answer in terms of OSI, vulnerabilities, DoS attacks, MiM/spoofs etc	We have not defined specific requirements regarding IT security. Such elements should be addressed in Section 7 (system architecture) and section 8 (SLA's).
23	Budget	How will the cost for ongoing maintenance, support and future development be recovered moving forward (and for running the service)?	As per the answer to q4, the PSTF service will initially be funded by the cOAlition S partners. Over time, and working on the assumption that the service will be deemed to be useful by a range of stakeholders, we would hope that we could move to a model where the costs are shared. Any multi-funding funding model that is developed will NOT be part of the system we are currently seeking to procure.
24	General Requirements clarification	It can be difficult to associate Framework APC data with individual journals. Will the service be able to propose additional data collection to resolve this?	At this point in time we do not envisage requesting changes to either of the approved Frameworks.
25	Operational	Is there a deadline for clarification questions for this tender?	Questions can be posted up until Monday 31 st May 2021 at 09.00 CEST.
26	Technical	Now UK is no longer in EEA, is service hosting/data storage in the UK acceptable for this service?	We expect the supplier to propose a robust and sustainable data hosting solution. If they anticipate that hosting data in the UK will be problematic for this project, the supplier should be ready to host the data in the EU. Suppliers based in the UK are expected to be informed about their country's relevant rules and regulations.
27	Budget	Can cOAlition S provide indicative budget range(s) for the elements of the RFP? i.e. indicative range for development, max projected budget for annual support?	As per the answer to q14 no budget figure has been made available. We expect Suppliers to determine what it will cost to build and support the PSTF. Part of the published evaluation criteria (Annex B) makes it clear that value for money will be used (in part) when scoring supplier bids.

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28	Operational	What resources and roles will cOAlition S have as part of their team, to work with the supplier during the development cycle?	The project will be managed by the cOAlition S Programme Manager who will be supported by a Task & Finish/Implementation Group, made up of members of the cOAlition S Experts Group. The cOAlition S PM will work with the appointed supplier on these activities. This is the model we have successfully used for the development of the Journal Checker Tool.
29	Operational	What resources & roles will cOAlition S have available to respond to queries, manage & update content to reflect policy changes etc. once the service is live?	See answer to q 28.
30	General Requirements Clarification	Are there scenarios where a publisher needs to be able to control who accesses their data, or at least flag a potential competition violation?	No, this is not expected. Publishers, when they deposit data, will be asked to agree to terms and conditions, which will make it clear that the data is for authorised users. We do not envisage any scenario where an authorised user is not able to access deposited data.
31	General Requirements Clarification	Are Authors who want to perform such lookups expected to have direct access to the system?	No. Authors will not have access to this service.
32	General Requirements Clarification	In our response document, for each row are you expecting an elaboration against each requirement or a simple Yes/ No?	As set out in the Response Grid (section 6) suppliers are asked to indicate whether they can (or cannot meet) the requirements. In cases where the supplier cannot meet the requirements, they are invited to explain why. In addition, specific questions are posed and suppliers are asked to complete these.
33	Technical	Given cOAlition s approve all users, then the authentication system is standalone, i.e. it does not need to connect/ integrate with any other system?	Suppliers should set out how their solution best meets the needs as defined in the ITT. As set out in Section 2, Suppliers are invited to consider, how, for example a login could be integrated with an institutions SSO solution.
34	Technical	Accessibility: are you seeking full text to speech capabilities?	As defined in Section 6.2, the web interface developed through this service must meet all relevant EU accessibility requirements necessary to enable persons with disabilities to use this service.
35	Technical	Does the service need to integrate directly with the	Yes. At its simplest it must be possible for the JCT to query the PSTF database to determine if a



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		Journal Checker Tool, reflecting if a journal is cOAlition S compliant ?	journal is making data available (Yes/no) in line with one of the approved frameworks.
36	Technical	Initial go-live date of 6th December for publishers, is this to allow Publishers to upload their data prior to full public launch in June?	Yes. Although there is no formal requirement to deposit data ahead of July 2022, we anticipate that some publishers will wish to deposit ahead of this date and hence are setting this go live date for the December 2021.
37	General Requirements Clarification	<p>The ITT response form (Annex A) requests under 4.2: Provide details on new clients won and clients lost over the past 2 years.</p> <p>Does this refer to contracts won and contracts not won (ie unsuccessful bids) or to contracts retained and contracts terminated?</p> <p>Also, should we respond for all activity or for just the contracts/bids that relate to this field of work?</p> <p>Are url links permitted within our text response?</p>	<p>Please include contracts retained and terminated, and focus on bids relevant to the work we are seeking to procure.</p> <p>Yes, urls can be included in the response.</p>
38	General Requirements Clarification	Requirement 6.1 highlights the need for a “clean, simple design” - does cOAlition S have existing branding / design guidelines that a supplier should adopt as part of the project delivery? Is there an existing pattern library for example that can be referenced or used as the basis for this work?	Yes, we can share our brand identity charter with the successful supplier (e.g. logo, colours, fonts etc).

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