



**Procurement of Housing and Debt Services in England and Wales from 1 April
2021
Invitation To Tender Information for Applicants**

Introduction

The Legal Aid Agency (“LAA”) has identified the need to identify new Housing and Debt Services providers in specific Housing and Debt Procurement Areas. Accordingly, it is inviting Applicants to submit a Tender to deliver services in:

Calderdale
City of Kingston upon Hull
Cornwall
Doncaster
East Riding of Yorkshire
Hartlepool
Leicestershire and Rutland
North Hertfordshire
Sandwell
Shropshire
Somerset
South Tyneside
Warrington and Halton
Wirral

The LAA is seeking to award Housing and Debt Face to Face Contracts in these Procurement Areas to any Applicant who meets the generic minimum requirements (set out at paragraph 2.6) and the current Housing and Debt minimum requirements set out below.

In order to increase the number of organisations who may bid to deliver this work, where an Applicant is not able to meet the minimum requirements in full (i.e. an Office in relevant Procurement Area which is a Permanent Presence) we will consider tenders from Applicants who cannot deliver services from a Permanent Presence within the relevant Procurement Area.

Applicants do not need to be a current legal aid provider to submit a tender, enabling organisations new to legal aid to bid to deliver this work.

The LAA is seeking bids from organisations who can:

- Deliver services through an Office in the Procurement Area which is a Permanent Presence; and/or
- Deliver services through an Office based in England and Wales which is a Permanent Presence and from which it delivers advice through digital media (“**Digital Service**”).

The full requirements that organisations need to meet to be awarded a 2018 Standard Civil Contract with authorisation in Housing and Debt are set out at paragraphs 1.6 – 1.8.

Digital Service delivery requirements

We expect that the Digital Service will replicate as far as possible an ‘in person’ face to face advice service, i.e. where the Client attends your Office for advice, for example, by being accessible to clients and/or members of the public for at least 7 hours between 8am and 8pm every day from Monday – Friday and be able to arrange appointments for Clients.

A Digital Service proposed by an Applicant should deliver services to clients via a video technology platform e.g. Zoom, Microsoft Teams, FaceTime.

The LAA is not seeking services delivered via a telephone only delivery model, as this service is already available to clients through Civil Legal Advice (CLA). Tenders received which proposed this delivery model will be rejected.

Whilst an Applicant bidding to deliver a Digital Service will not be required to have a Permanent Presence in the Procurement Area from which they are tendering to deliver services, an Applicant must:

- Deliver the Digital Service from an Office in England and Wales which meets the Permanent Presence requirement; and
- Be prepared to assess whether any service adaptations or reasonable adjustments are required for clients and be prepared to deliver in person, face to face advice if needed, either themselves or through an Agent.

Applicants bidding to deliver a Digital Service must detail in their tender how they intend to deliver services within the relevant Procurement Area and must give satisfactory assurance of how they will provide an effective service to clients, including how clients will know about the service and how to access it.

The Deadline for submitting Tenders is 5pm on 18 February 2021 (“Deadline”)

Applicants wishing to deliver Housing and Debt Contract Work under a 2018 Standard Civil Contract must submit a Tender which consists of:

- i. a response to the Selection Questionnaire (“**SQ Response**” or “**SQ**”); and

ii. an Individual Bid(s) to deliver Contract Work in one or more of the Procurement Areas covered by this procurement process.

A Tender consists of a response to the SQ plus at least one Individual Bid.

All Applicants must submit a response to the SQ, regardless of whether they have already submitted a SQ Response as part of a previous procurement process.

This Information for Applicants document (“**IFA**”) provides information about the Housing and Debt ITTs, including how Applicants submit a Tender, and the rules governing this procurement process.

Before submitting their Tender, Applicants must read this IFA and all supplementary information provided, such as Frequently Asked Questions (“**FAQs**”) in their entirety. Applicants are also strongly advised to read the 2018 Standard Civil Contract in full to ensure that they understand the full nature and extent of the obligations they are proposing to accept.

Where an Applicant is notified of the LAA’s intention to award them a contract subject to verification, it is the Applicant’s sole responsibility to ensure they provide all necessary verification information.

Where not defined in the body of this IFA, capitalised terms are either defined in the glossary at Annex E or in the 2018 Standard Civil Contract which is available alongside this IFA. Where the context requires it, words denoting the singular include, the plural and words denoting the plural include the singular.

Timetable

Below is a list of indicative dates for key activities as part of this procurement process. These dates may be subject to change and the LAA will notify Applicants of any changes through the e-Tendering system.

Activity	Timescale
Procurement process opens	19 January 2021
Deadline for questions about this IFA	23:59 2 February 2021
‘Frequently Asked Questions’ document published (if required)	Week beginning 8 February 2021
Deadline for submission of Tenders	5pm 18 February 2021
Outcome of Tenders notified to Applicants	Week beginning 1 March 2021
Final deadline for submitting verification information (where Applicant does not submit verification information with their Tender)	23:59 16 March 2021
Contract Start Date	1 April 2021

Applicants will have the opportunity to submit their verification information with their Tender, however, successful Applicants must provide all compliant verification information by the final verification deadline of 23:59 on 16 March 2021. If an Applicant completes the verification process they will be able to deliver Contract Work awarded through this procurement process from 1 April 2021.

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SECTION 1: OVERVIEW

About the LAA and this procurement process

- 1.1 The LAA, on behalf of the Lord Chancellor, is responsible for commissioning and administering legal aid services (publicly funded advice and representation) across England and Wales in accordance with the Legal Aid, Sentencing and Punishment of Offenders Act 2012 and associated legislation. All contract documentation is issued by the LAA on behalf of the Lord Chancellor.
- 1.2 The Deadline for submitting Tenders is **5pm on 18 February 2021**. All Tenders must be completed and submitted using the e-Tendering system. Late submissions will not be accepted. It is the Applicant's sole responsibility to ensure that the LAA receives its Tender before the Deadline.
- 1.3 The LAA will award Face to Face Contracts to deliver legal advice and representation in the Housing and Debt Categories of Law from 1 April 2021 in the following Procurement Areas:
 - Calderdale
 - City of Kingston upon Hull
 - Cornwall
 - Doncaster
 - East Riding of Yorkshire
 - Hartlepool
 - Leicestershire and Rutland
 - North Hertfordshire
 - Sandwell
 - Shropshire
 - Somerset
 - South Tyneside
 - Warrington & Halton
 - Wirral
- 1.4 Applicants should refer to the Category Definitions 2018 for detail on the scope of work included in the Housing and Debt Categories of Law.
- 1.5 There is no limit to the number of Contracts that may be awarded. Applicants that meet the LAA's minimum requirements to hold a Face to Face Contract (the SQ requirements) and who can meet the relevant General and Category-specific requirements set out in this IFA will be awarded a Face to Face Contract.

Who can bid?

- 1.6 Any organisation who meets the minimum contract requirements may tender to deliver Housing and Debt Services. The minimum requirements to hold a 2018 Standard Civil Contract with authorisation in Housing and Debt are that:
 - The Applicant holds a relevant Quality Standard;

- The Applicant has at least one Office in England and Wales which meets the Permanent Presence requirements set out in the 2018 Standard Civil Contract Specification;
 - The Applicant must employ at least one Full Time Equivalent (“FTE”) Supervisor who meets the Supervisor Standard as set out at paragraph 2.10 – 2.25 of the 2018 Standard Civil Contract General Specification and in the Civil Contract Category Specific Rules Housing and Debt (Section 10) (1 January 2021);
 - The Applicant meets the one FTE Supervisor to four FTE Caseworker ratio at each Office from which it will deliver Housing and Debt Services;
 - Each Office in the Procurement Area from which the Applicant is tendering to deliver Housing and Debt Contract Work must be a Permanent Presence
 - The Applicant must employ at least one Part Time Equivalent (PTE) Authorised Litigator with experience of delivering Housing and Debt cases, who will be available to each of its Offices to deliver Licensed Work.
- 1.7 Where Applicants do not meet the Permanent Presence requirements, they may still on Tender on the basis of delivering a Digital Service within the relevant Procurement Area.
- 1.8 An Applicant who does not meet the Permanent Presence requirements and tenders to deliver a Digital Service must meet all other minimum requirements set out above in paragraph 1.6.
- 1.9 For the avoidance of doubt for each Procurement Area in which Applicants are bidding to deliver Housing and Debt Contract Work Applicants can either deliver:
- ‘In person’ advice through a Permanent Presence in the Procurement Area; or
 - A Digital Service delivered via a video technology platform, from an Office anywhere in England and Wales.
- 1.10 A Digital Service proposed by an Applicant should deliver services to clients via a video technology platform e.g. Zoom, Microsoft Teams, FaceTime, as this most closely replicates an in person, face to face meeting. A proposal based on telephone only delivery model will be rejected as this service is already available to clients through Civil Legal Advice (CLA).
- 1.11 Applicants who tender to deliver a Digital Service must be prepared to assess whether any service adaptations or reasonable adjustments are required for clients and be prepared to deliver advice in person, if needed, either themselves or through an Agent.
- 1.12 A Digital Service should be accessible to clients and/or members of the public for at least 7 hours between 8am and 8pm every day from Monday – Friday and be able to arrange appointments for Clients.
- 1.13 Applicants must be able to give satisfactory assurance of how they will provide an effective service to clients, including how clients will know about the service and how to access it and the links the Applicant has/will have with

relevant organisations in the Procurement Area in order to build a signposting/referral network.

Example

An Applicant bids to deliver Housing and Debt Contract Work in the Doncaster Procurement Area through a Digital Service. The Caseworkers and Supervisors who will deliver the Digital Service are based outside the Doncaster Procurement Area.

The Applicant's Tender sets out that they have established links with a Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB) in the Doncaster Procurement Area and that CAB staff will signpost/refer clients to the Applicant's Digital Service.

The Tender also confirms that the CAB is able to make appointments for clients with the Applicant and, where required, enable the Client to use their interview rooms to attend their digital appointment via the video technology platform(s) used by the Applicant.

In addition, the Tender confirms that the Applicant will instruct an Agent based in the Doncaster Procurement Area who will provide any in person advice required by a client and sets out their Agent's details where applicable.

- 1.14 The LAA will not accept subcontracting or consortia arrangements but the use of Agents is permitted in certain circumstances set out in paragraphs 1.26 - 1.28.

About the Housing and Debt Face to Face Contract

- 1.15 The Face to Face Contract will start on 1 April 2021 (the "Contract Start Date") and will run until 31 August 2021 (subject to the LAA's rights of early termination and LAA's right to extend the Contract for up to a further 2 years i.e. 31 August 2023).

- 1.16 Each Face to Face Contract consists of and is formed by the following parts:
- Contract for Signature;
 - 2018 Standard Terms (applicable to all contracts irrespective of the specific services to be provided);
 - Specification (governs how work must be delivered and includes the key performance indicators that Providers must meet. There are two parts to the Specification – the General Specification which applies to all services under the Face to Face Contract, except Family Mediation, and the Category Specific Specifications which apply to individual Categories);
 - Schedules (set out the Categories of Law a Provider is authorised to undertake work in, the volume of work and any bespoke terms relevant to the delivery of Services at a particular Office location); and
 - Category Definitions (set out the scope of work permitted in each Category of Law).

- 1.17 Face to Face Contract documentation, is available on the LAA's website: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/standard-civil-contract-2018>.

Please note that the Contract for Signature for successful Applicants who do not currently hold a 2018 Standard Civil Contract will be amended so that recital A refers to the date on which this IFA was published and, at Clause 2.1, the Contract Start Date will be expressed as being 1 April 2021 and the Contract Period defined as the period from the Contract Start Date to 31 August 2021.

- 1.18 Applicants may be party to no more than one 2018 Standard Civil Contract. Therefore, if an Applicant successfully bids for Contract Work available through this procurement process and who already holds a 2018 Standard Civil Contract, Contract Work awarded through this procurement process will be added to their existing 2018 Standard Civil Contract, either through a new Schedule or through an amendment to an existing Schedule.
- 1.19 Under the 2018 Standard Civil Contract organisations have one or more Schedules (i.e. one Schedule for each Office). Each Schedule details the Contract Work (including Categories of Law and Matter Start allocations) authorised at the Office. Where an Applicant has tendered through this procurement process from an Office for which they already have a Schedule, Contract Work awarded through this procurement process will be added to their Contract through an amendment to that existing Schedule. Where an Applicant has tendered through this procurement process from an Office for which they don't already have a Schedule, a new Schedule for that Office will be added to their 2018 Standard Civil Contract.
- 1.20 Where an Applicant has tendered through this procurement process to provide a Digital Service, Contract Work awarded through this procurement process will be added to their Contract through an amendment to the Schedule for the Office(s) form which Applicant's confirm in their Tender.
- 1.21 Housing and Debt Contract Work is divided into two broad areas:
 - Controlled Work: generally basic levels of advice and assistance prior to issue of proceedings; and
 - Licensed Work: generally representation – issue and conduct of proceedings and advocacy.
- 1.22 Controlled Work cases are known as 'Matters' or 'Matter Starts'. Controlled Work permits Providers with available Matter Starts to assist clients directly without prior authority from the LAA.
- 1.23 There is no limit to the volume of Licensed Work that a Provider may undertake. However, funding applications must be submitted to the LAA for each Licensed Work case.
- 1.24 Whilst the LAA may allocate a certain volume of Matter Starts to Providers, no guarantee is provided in relation to the volume or value of work which individual Providers will receive/be paid for under any Face to Face Contract. Services are provided under open market conditions and clients are free to choose from those Providers holding a 2018 Standard Civil Contract.

Payment

- 1.25 Payments under Face to Face Contracts will be at the rates set out in Legal Aid Legislation.

Using Agents

- 1.26 For the purposes of this Contract, an Agent is an individual not employed by the Provider used in the provision of Housing and Debt services.
- 1.27 Applicants intending to use Agents should familiarise themselves with the relevant clauses in the 2018 Standard Civil Contract on using Agents.
- 1.28 As set out in Clause 3 of the 2018 Standard Civil Contract, where an Agent is instructed by a Provider the Provider remains responsible for the fulfilment of all their obligations under the Contract and remains responsible for ensuring an Agent's work is properly supervised, that their work complies with the requirements of the Contract and that all arrangements made for the management and delivery of their work comply with the standards and requirements of this Contract
- 1.29 Where an Applicant bidding to deliver Digital Advice services intends to use an Agent to deliver advice in person where required by Clients in the relevant Procurement Area, this must be specified in the Applicant's ITT Response and the name and address of the Agent(s) confirmed.

About Housing and Debt Face to Face Contract Work

- 1.30 Contract Work is delivered at individual Offices. An Applicant must detail in its Tender the Contract Work that it is tendering to deliver from each Office. A Tender to deliver Contract Work in the Housing and Debt Categories of Law from a particular Office is known as an "**Individual Bid**". Consequently, the Tender of an Applicant wishing to deliver Contract Work from multiple Offices will contain an Individual Bid for each Office in the Housing and Debt Categories of Law.
- 1.31 There is no limit to the number of Matter Starts the LAA intends to award in any Procurement Area. Successful Applicants will be awarded 50 Matter Starts in Housing and 10 Matter Starts in Debt on a pro rata basis until 31 August 2021, subject to completing verification.
- 1.32 It is the Applicant's sole responsibility to ensure they provide the LAA with all the necessary information to verify their Tender no later than 23:59 16 March 2021 before the Contract Start Date.

Supplementary Matter Starts

- 1.33 Applicants awarded a Face to Face Contract will, subject to notifying their LAA Contract Manager and receiving Contract Manager confirmation, be able to self-grant up to an additional 50% of their Matter Start allocation at that Office each year if required. For example, where a successful Applicant is awarded 50 Matter Starts they will be able to self-grant up to an additional 25 Matter Starts (50% of 50), resulting in a total of 75 Matter Starts for that Schedule Period.
- 1.34 During each year of the Contract Period Providers will also be able to re-allocate up to 50% of Matter Starts between Offices authorised to deliver the same Category of Law, subject to following the process at paragraph 1.32. For example, an Applicant with two successful Individual Bids (50 Matter Starts at each Office) could re-allocate up to 25 Matter Starts (50% of 50) from one Office to another. This would result in an allocation of 75 Matter Starts at one Office and 25 Matter Starts at the other.
- 1.35 Applicants should familiarise themselves with the Face to Face Contract provisions regarding the award of Supplementary Matter Starts and re-allocating Matter Starts at clauses 1.21 - 1.24 of the General Specification.

SECTION 2: PROCUREMENT PROCESS REQUIREMENTS

- 2.1 Applicants wishing to deliver Housing and Debt Contract Work must submit a Tender which consists of a response to the SQ and an Individual Bid for one or more offices in each of the Housing and Debt Procurement Areas in which it wishes to deliver Contract Work.
- 2.2 The SQ and each Individual Bid submitted must each be capable of assessment.
- 2.3 Applicants may not submit more than one response to the SQ and Housing and Debt ITT. Where an Applicant submits more than one SQ Response and/or more than one Housing and Debt ITT Response only the last submitted prior to the Deadline shall be assessed by the LAA.
- 2.4 An Applicant must ensure that its entire Tender is capable of concurrent delivery. Where it submits an Individual Bid for multiple Procurement Areas and/or Offices it is warranting that it will be able to deliver concurrent services in each of those Procurement Areas/Offices if successful.
- 2.5 If a SQ or Individual Bid is not submitted or is incapable of assessment it will be rejected.

Generic requirements

- 2.6 All Applicants tendering to deliver Housing and Debt Contract Work must be able to provide evidence by 23:59 on 16 March 2021 as to how they meet the following requirements:

Requirement	Who must evidence this requirement
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The Applicant holds a relevant Quality Standard	All Applicants
The Applicant has appropriate authorisation from a Relevant Professional Body where required under the Legal Services Act 2007	All Applicants
The Applicant must have at least one Office in England and Wales which meets the Permanent Presence requirements set out in the 2018 Standard Civil Contract Specification	All Applicants

Quality Standard requirement

- 2.7 Contract holders will be required to hold a Quality Standard throughout the Contract Period.
- 2.8 Applicants must be able to evidence by 23:59 on 16 March 2021 before the Contract Start Date that they hold either the LAA’s Specialist Quality Mark (“SQM”) following audit by the LAA’s SQM Audit Provider or the Law Society’s Lexcel Practice Management standard (“Lexcel”).
- 2.9 Applicants are solely responsible for paying all necessary fees to the Quality Standard auditing organisation.
- 2.10 Where an Applicant already holds the SQM following audit by the LAA’s SQM Audit Provider or is in the process of being audited by them, it need not reapply for the SQM, unless it must do so to continue to hold the SQM.
- 2.11 Requirements according to the Quality Standard an Applicant chooses to hold are detailed below:

Applicant Type	Requirement
Applicants who intend to hold the SQM	Pass desktop audit by 1 April 2021 Fully pass the Pre-QM audit within six months of the Contract Start Date
Applicants who intend to hold Lexcel	Achieve Lexcel accreditation by 1 April 2021
Applicants who already hold Lexcel	Must hold a valid accreditation that will be in force until at least 1 April 2021
Applicants who already hold an SQM audited by the LAA’s SQM Audit Provider	Must hold a valid accreditation that will be in force until at least 1 April 2021

- 2.12 It is an Applicant’s responsibility to ensure it meets the LAA’s requirements by 1 April 2021 (see paragraph 8.3 – 8.4). Applicants are therefore advised to apply for their chosen Quality Standard as early as possible.

2.13 It is the sole responsibility of the Applicant to contact the Quality Standard auditing organisation and arrange any necessary audits. The LAA assumes no responsibility for monitoring Applicants' progress towards achieving a Quality Standard.

2.14 Further information about the SQM and how to register with the LAA's current SQM Audit Provider can be found at <http://www.recognisingexcellence.co.uk/sqm>

2.15 Further information on Lexcel can be found on The Law Society's website: <http://www.lawsociety.org.uk/productsandservices/lexcel.page>.

Appropriate authorisation from a Relevant Professional Body

2.16 The required services include "reserved legal activities" which can only be carried on by authorised persons, exempt persons, or certain non-commercial organisations which are subject to transitional provisions, as defined within the Legal Services Act 2007. Applicants for a Face to Face Contract must, therefore, ensure that they have all necessary licences and authorisations from a Relevant Professional Body to conduct Contract Work by 23:59 on 16 March 2021.

Office requirement

2.17 Contract holders will be required to have at least one Office in England and Wales which meets the Permanent Presence requirements set out in the 2018 Standard Civil Contract General Specification: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/948266/2018_Standard_Civil_Contract_General_Specification_on_1_January_2021_Clean.pdf

2.18 Applicants must be able to evidence that they meet this requirement by 23:59 on 16 March 2021.

Housing and Debt Category-specific requirements

2.19 In addition to meeting the requirements of the SQ and the above generic requirements, Applicants will need to meet the requirements specific to the Housing and Debt Categories of Law.

2.20 Applicants must warrant at the time of submitting their ITT Response that they will meet these requirements. Applicants must be able to evidence how they meet these requirements by 23.59 on 16 March 2021.

Supervisor requirements

2.21 Applicants must employ at least one Full Time Equivalent ("FTE") Supervisor who meets the Supervisor Standard as set out at paragraph 2.10 – 2.25 of the 2018 Standard Civil Contract General Specification and in the Civil Contract Category Specific Rules Housing and Debt (Section 10) (1 January 2021).

- 2.22 An individual Supervisor may not supervise more than two Offices/Digital Services in total.
- 2.23 The use of external (i.e. non-employed) Supervisors is not permitted.
- 2.24 Minimum Supervisor ratios are detailed at 2.26 – 2.28 of the General Specification. Each FTE Supervisor may supervise no more than 4 FTE caseworkers.
- 2.25 For the avoidance of doubt Applicants who meet the supervisor requirements will need to provide the relevant and compliant Supervisor Declaration Form in relation to each Supervisor by 23.59 on 16 March 2021.

Offices

- 2.26 Applicants are able to Tender to deliver Services:
- i. Through an Office in each of the relevant Procurement Area bid for which is a Permanent Presence; and/or
 - ii. Through an Office in England and Wales which is a Permanent Presence and which will deliver a Digital Service in the relevant Procurement Area.
- 2.27 Applicants who wish to deliver a Digital Service must set out in their Tender how they intend to deliver the service, including the Office in England and Wales from which the service will be delivered (where known at the time of Tender).
- 2.28 Applicants must submit an Individual Bid in the Procurement Area(s) for each Office from which they intend to deliver services and will be required to confirm the Office from which services will be delivered (either an Office in the relevant Procurement Area which is a Permanent Presence or an Office in England and Wales which is a Permanent Presence from which a Digital Service will be delivered).
- 2.29 Applicants bidding to deliver services from a Permanent Presence in the relevant Procurement Area should check that they tender in the correct Procurement Area(s) for their Office(s). To do this, an Applicant must enter the postcode for their Office (or intended Office) into the 'Find your local council' tool on the Gov.uk website: <https://www.gov.uk/find-local-council>. Annex A lists the Procurement Areas for the Housing and Debt Categories and the local authorities included in each.
- 2.30 Where an Applicant wishes to tender to deliver Contract Work from more Offices than permitted within the ITT i.e. more than 5, they must contact the LAA in accordance with paragraph 4.22 no later than 23:59 on 8 February 2021.
- 2.31 Applicants are not required to have operational Offices at the point of submitting a Tender. Applicants are required to confirm they will meet the relevant Office requirements as part of their Tender. As part of an ITT Response Applicants should provide the address(es) of where they intend to deliver Contract Work, where known at the time of tender, together with the relevant LAA account

number where the Applicant is a current LAA contract holder at that Office. Where an Applicant is tendering to deliver in person advice services from an office which meets the definition of a Permanent Presence, the Office location must be in the Procurement Area for which it tenders. The LAA will validate address details provided.

- 2.32 All Applicants must be able to by evidence by 23:59 16 March 2021 that they meet the verification requirements, including those relating to Offices.
- 2.33 Where an Applicant's Individual Bid to deliver in person advice services from a Permanent Presence includes an Office which is not in the Procurement Area stated in their Individual Bid, the LAA will not reject the Individual Bid outright. Rather, the LAA will inform the Applicant at the point of notification that their Office is not in the Procurement Area tendered for. Where an Applicant is unable to evidence at the point of verification that they have an Office which is in the Procurement Area tendered for as part of the Individual Bid the LAA will reject the relevant Individual Bid.

Digital Service delivery requirements

- 2.34 Applicants who confirm they will deliver a Digital Service must detail in their tender response how they intend to deliver services within the relevant Procurement Area.
- 2.35 Applicants who tender to deliver a Digital Service must be able to demonstrate that they have processes in place to assess whether any service adaptations or reasonable adjustments are required for clients and to deliver advice in person if needed, either themselves or through an Agent.
- 2.36 An Applicant who is not able to demonstrate that they will effectively assess whether any service adaptations or reasonable adjustments are required for clients and be able to deliver in person advice if needed, may have their Individual Bid rejected.
- 2.37 A Digital Service should be accessible to clients and/or members of the public for at least 7 hours between 8am and 8pm every day from Monday – Friday and be able to arrange appointments for Clients.
- 2.38 Applicants must give satisfactory assurance of how they will provide an effective service to clients, including how clients will know about the service and how to access it and the links the Applicant has/will have with relevant organisations in the Procurement Area in order to build a signposting/referral network.

Authorised Litigator

- 2.39 Applicants must employ at least one Part Time Equivalent (PTE) Authorised Litigator with experience of delivering Housing and Debt cases, who will be available to each of its Offices/Delivery Services to deliver Licensed Work.

SECTION 3: e-TENDERING SYSTEM

- 3.1 All Tenders must be completed and submitted using the e-Tendering system. This can be accessed either through a link on the tender pages of the LAA website or directly at www.legalaid.bravosolution.co.uk
- 3.2 Applicants already registered on the e-Tendering system whose registration details remain up to date do not need to register again. Applicants are encouraged to ensure that they review the contact details held in the e-Tendering system to ensure these are up to date.
- 3.3 Where an Applicant already has multiple registrations on the e-Tendering system it should ensure that it uses the registration which matches the name and trading status of the organisation on whose behalf the Tender is submitted.
- 3.4 Applicants who have forgotten their password, must click on the 'Forgotten your password?' link on the e-Tendering system homepage to get their password reset.
- 3.5 Applicants must familiarise themselves with the e-Tendering system guides available through the 'Technical Support and Guidance' link on the e-Tendering system home page. These provide detailed guidance on how to complete a Tender.
- 3.6 The LAA will communicate with Applicants about this procurement process through the e-Tendering system message board. Applicants must check the message board regularly to ensure that any messages are read promptly. The LAA highly recommends that Applicants set up multiple additional users under their e-Tendering system registration (see 'Technical Support and Guidance' link) as back-up to ensure that urgent messages, which may affect an Applicant's Tender, can be actioned as necessary.
- 3.7 The SQ and Housing and Debt ITT is available via the 'Project' or 'ITT Open to all Suppliers' link on the front page of the e-Tendering system.
- 3.8 All Applicants must submit a SQ Response and a Housing and Debt ITT Response.
- 3.9 Applicants are not obliged to respond to all of the Procurement Areas offered through this procurement process; they only need to submit an Individual Bid for the relevant to the Procurement Area(s) in which their Office(s) is located/ in which they will be delivering a Digital Service. Applicants must ensure that they select the correct Procurement Areas when submitting their Tender.
- 3.10 Applicants must click 'Edit response' to be able to complete their responses to the questions asked. Applicants must click the 'Save Changes' or 'Save and Exit Response' buttons to ensure information inputted is saved.
- 3.11 Once Applicants have completed their response to the SQ and the Housing and Debt ITT, they must submit it by clicking on the "Submit Response" button.
- 3.12 Applicants may amend and re-submit their response at any time up to the Deadline. If so amended and re-submitted, only the last response shall be assessed.

- 3.13 An Applicant may check that it has successfully submitted its SQ/Housing and Debt ITT Response by going to the 'My ITTs' screen, which should show the 'Response status' as 'Response submitted to Buyer'. The registered email address will also receive confirmation when the Applicant submits its Tender for the first time. It is therefore important for an Applicant to ensure that any and all contact details held in the e-Tendering system are up to date.
- 3.14 SQ and Housing and Debt ITT Responses are sealed. This means that the LAA is unable to access submitted SQ/Housing and Debt ITT Response prior to the Deadline. The LAA cannot confirm receipt of a SQ or Housing and Debt ITT Response, nor can it confirm if a SQ or Housing and Debt ITT has been completed correctly.
- 3.15 All questions marked with a red asterisk on the e-Tendering system are mandatory. The e-Tendering system will not permit an Applicant to submit its SQ/Housing and Debt ITT Response unless answers to those questions are provided.
- 3.16 There is a button in the e-Tendering system called 'check mandatory questions'. By clicking on this the e-Tendering system will check that an Applicant has provided a response to all mandatory questions and will flag where a response to a mandatory question has not been given. For the avoidance of doubt, it does not provide an assessment of the responses to those questions or confirmation that they have been answered correctly.
- 3.17 When an Applicant submits its SQ/Housing and Debt ITT Response for the first time, it will receive an automated message confirming that its response has been successfully submitted. This only provides an indication of whether the SQ/Housing and Debt ITT Response has been transmitted to the LAA and not whether the SQ/Housing and Debt ITT is fully completed and/or will be assessed as being successful.

SECTION 4: COMPLETION OF THE SELECTION QUESTIONNAIRE AND HOUSING AND DEBT ITTs

COMPLETION OF THE SELECTION QUESTIONNAIRE

- 4.1 A Response to the SQ must be submitted by **all** Applicants. If no SQ Response has been submitted, this will be considered an incomplete Tender and the LAA will reject the Applicant's Tender in its entirety.
- 4.2 The SQ can be found in Project 118 at ITT 677 – 'Selection Questionnaire for the Housing and Debt Services from 1 April 2021' in the e-Tendering system.
- 4.3 The SQ contains a series of questions covering the following areas:
- Section A (non-assessed) - Organisation and contact details
 - Section B - Grounds for mandatory exclusion
 - Section C - Grounds for discretionary exclusion
 - Section D – Declarations
- 4.4 A full breakdown of each of the questions and what would constitute a pass or a fail is set out in Annex B

Section A - Organisation and contact details

- 4.5 This information is non-assessed but may be used in the verification of the Applicant's Tender. Applicants who have yet to form legal entities may provide "N/A" responses to some questions within this section. Where successful, and as part of verification, they will be required to confirm, for example, their head office address or other details not provided as part of the Tender.

Sections B and C – Grounds for mandatory and discretionary rejection

- 4.6 For each question the Applicant is presented with a series of drop down options from which to select a response.
- 4.7 Where a requirement is not met outright the Applicant will be provided with a series of 'free text' boxes in which to give further details (known as 'exceptional circumstances'). These will be used by the LAA to consider whether those exceptional circumstances are deemed to be satisfactory for the Applicant to meet the SQ requirement.
- 4.8 Where the opportunity to provide exceptional circumstances is given, specific details in response to the supplemental questions are requested within the SQ. This must not be used as an opportunity to provide other supplementary information to an Applicant's SQ response and any information provided that is not relevant to the particular SQ requirement and explanation of exceptional circumstances will not be considered.
- 4.9 Subject to paragraph 4.10 below, the LAA will assess SQ responses on the basis of information submitted by the Applicant in its SQ Response. SQ Responses for Sections B and C will be assessed on a pass or fail basis.
- 4.10 Where an Applicant's SQ Response states it does not meet the SQ requirements outright in questions C.8 (LAA contract terminations), C.9 (Peer Review) and C.10 (individuals prohibited from undertaking publicly funded work) the LAA will review its own records in assessing whether the requirements have been met. For all other questions in Section B and C, the LAA's assessment will be solely reliant on information provided by the Applicant. That information must be complete and accurately expressed. Applicants' attention is drawn to the LAA's right to disqualify an Applicant for submitting false and/or misleading information as provided at paragraphs 9.30 - 9.32 of this IFA.

Section D – Declaration

- 4.16 A declaration in the form set out at Section D of the SQ (see Annex B below) must be provided by:
- (a) the Compliance Officer for Legal Practice (COLP) or the individual intending to be the COLP where Applicant is or intends to be authorised by the Solicitors Regulation Authority (SRA); or
 - (b) the Head of Legal Practice (HOLP) or the individual intending to be the HOLP where Applicant is or intends to be authorised by the Bar Standards Board (BSB); or
 - (c) the Compliance Manager (CM) or the individual intending to be the CM where Applicant is or intends to be authorised by CILEx Regulation (CILEx); or
 - (d) where the Applicant is not (and will not be) authorised by the SRA, the BSB or CILEx, a member of Key Personnel who either (i) has decision and / or veto rights over decisions relating to the running of the Applicant; or (ii) has the right

to exercise, or actually exercises, significant influence or control over the Applicant.

COMPLETION OF THE HOUSING AND DEBT ITT

4.17 An Applicant wishing to bid to deliver Housing and Debt Contract Work must submit a response through the e-Tendering system to the Housing and Debt ITT, which can be found in the e-Tendering system as follows:

ITT 680 – Legal Aid Services in Housing and Debt from 1 April 2021

4.18 The Housing and Debt ITT contains a series of questions covering the following areas:

- Organisation and contact details (Section A)
- Individual Bid details (Section B)
- Verification (Section C)
- Warranties and Declarations (Section D)

4.19 A full breakdown of each of the questions for the Housing and Debt ITT is included in the ITT and is replicated at Annex C.

4.20 Applicants must respond to each question in the Housing and Debt ITT by selecting the correct drop-down option or by providing a typed answer in the free text box provided. Each free text box is limited to 2000 characters (including spaces).

4.21 Where a question requires a response from a drop-down menu, Applicants may either select an option from the drop-down list or, if they know the answer option they wish to select, use the quick search functionality by typing in the 'response' box in the e-Tendering system.

4.22 Where an Applicant wishes to tender from more Offices than is catered for in the ITT, the Applicant must send a message to the LAA via the e-Tendering messaging portal no later than 23:59 on 8 February 2021 requesting a form on which they can provide details about additional offices. The LAA will then supply a form which the Applicant must complete and save it to their own computer before attaching it to a message in the e-Tendering system and sending this to the LAA before the Deadline.

4.23 Applicants who want to submit compliant verification information with their Housing and Debt Tender can do so at Section C. An Applicant who confirms in Section C that they wish to provide compliant verification information must provide all the information required to verify its Tender.

4.24 Where an Applicant wishes to submit more than one Supervisor Declaration Form for one or more of its Individual Bids, the completed Supervisor Declaration Forms must be merged into a single document and the single document uploaded into the e-tendering system.

4.25 Before submitting its Tender, an Applicant must check that it has answered all questions correctly. If a Tender is incomplete, for example because all questions have not been answered correctly, it may be assessed as unsuccessful.

- 4.26 Tenders will not be opened by the LAA until after the Deadline and therefore if an Applicant's Tender is incomplete, this will only be identified on assessment, at which point it shall be too late for Applicant to submit any further information.

SECTION 5: APPLICANTS' QUESTIONS

- 5.1 If an Applicant has a question about the procurement process to which they cannot find an answer either in this document or in the guidance provided in the e-Tendering system, they may direct it through one of two different channels depending on the nature of the query.

Questions about this IFA

- 5.2 If an Applicant has any questions about the content of this IFA, it may submit them up via the e-Tendering system until **23.59 on 2 February 2021**. This is referred to in the e-Tendering system as the 'End date for supplier clarification messages'.
- 5.3 All such questions must be submitted using the e-Tendering system message boards.
- 5.4 Because of the way the LAA downloads messages from the e-Tendering system, it may appear that Applicants' messages have not been read. Applicants should not assume that this is the case and re-send messages to the LAA. All messages will be responded to. However, during peak periods of activity it may take the LAA longer to respond due to the increased volumes of messages received.
- 5.5 Applicants should assume that questions and answers may be published. Questions that the LAA considers to be of wider interest may be collated and answered centrally in writing to ensure that all potential Applicants have equal access to information. Questions and answers will be published on the LAA's tender pages <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/civil-tender-activity-2021> in the 'Procurement Process for Housing and Debt Contracts from April 2020' Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)' and through the Supplier Attachments section of the e-Tendering system.
- 5.6 Applicants should note that this is the only opportunity to ask questions about the procurement process. The LAA will not be able to provide responses to questions about the process through any other method.

Technical questions about how to operate the e-Tendering system

- 5.7 There is an e-Tendering helpdesk to provide technical support in relation to the use of the e-Tendering system. The helpdesk is **unable** to assist with problems with Applicants' own computer hardware or systems. For these types of issues Applicants should contact their own IT support.
- 5.8 Questions for the e-Tendering helpdesk should be emailed to: help@bravosolution.co.uk Alternatively, the telephone number for the helpdesk is 0800 069 8630 and lines are open from 8am to 6pm Monday to Friday.
- 5.9 The LAA recommends that Applicants start to complete their Tenders early so that they identify any areas in which they need help as soon as possible as the helpdesk is likely to be very busy in the days leading up to the Deadline. The

LAA cannot guarantee that queries received close to the Deadline will be dealt with in time and accepts no responsibility if they are not.

- 5.10 Applicants should note that the e-Tendering helpdesk is the only method by which they can receive assistance on using the e-Tendering system.

SECTION 6: TENDER ASSESSMENT

SQ assessment

- 6.1 The LAA will check that the Applicant has submitted an SQ Response. In the event that no SQ Response has been submitted this will be considered an incomplete Tender and the LAA will reject the Applicant's Tender in its entirety.
- 6.2 The LAA will conduct an assessment of an Applicant's SQ Response in accordance with the assessment approach detailed in Annex B.
- 6.3 The sole right of appeal is set out at paragraph 9.40 of this IFA. That right of appeal applies solely where the LAA assesses the Applicant's SQ Response as unsuccessful.
- 6.4 Applicants that are assessed as having passed the SQ will proceed to the assessment for the ITT set out below.

Housing and Debt ITT assessment

- 6.5 Housing and Debt ITT Responses will be assessed in the following stages:

- Stage 1 – ITT requirements check
- Stage 2 – Verification (where applicable)
- Stage 3 – Contract award (subject to verification)
- Stage 4 – Verification

Stage 1 – ITT requirements check

- 6.6 The LAA will conduct an assessment of:
- Any address and postcode details provided as part of an Individual Bid; and
 - The declarations and warranties provided as part of an ITT Response.

Assessment of Permanent Presence requirements

- 6.7 Where an Applicant tenders to deliver advice through a Permanent Presence in the relevant Procurement Area, the LAA will assess any address and postcode details provided as part of an Individual Bid for an Office and undertake the following assessment based on the information submitted.
- 6.8 Where an Applicant has provided the address of an Office which is not in the Procurement Area stated in the corresponding Individual Bid, the LAA will act in accordance with paragraph 2.33.
- 6.9 Where no address details are provided as part of an Individual Bid, an address check will be conducted as part of verification (stage 6). Applicants must be able evidence an Office in the relevant Procurement Area by 23.59 on 16 March 2021.

Assessment of Digital Service delivery requirements

- 6.10 Where an Applicant bids to deliver a Digital Service in a Procurement Area the LAA will assess the responses given to questions A.3.i - A.3.v which request details of how the Applicant intends to deliver the service.
- 6.11 Sufficient detail should be provided in response to these questions to enable the LAA to obtain satisfactory assurance of how the Applicant will provide an effective service for clients.
- 6.12 Where an Applicant's proposal does not include how they will assess whether any service adaptations or reasonable adjustments are required for clients and how they will deliver in person advice if needed, either themselves or through an Agent, the LAA will act in accordance with paragraph 2.36.

Declarations and warranties assessment

- 6.13 The LAA will review the warranties and declarations given in an Applicant's Tender (Section D of the ITT) to ensure the Applicant has provided the necessary declarations and warranties.
- 6.14 The LAA will assess the declarations and warranties on the basis of information submitted. Responses will be assessed on a pass or fail basis.
- 6.15 Where the Applicant fails to provide the necessary declarations and warranties, the whole Tender may fail.
- 6.16 Applicants who are assessed as having provided the necessary declarations and warranties will be eligible for the award of a Face to Face Contract, and their Tender will be assessed as successful, subject to verification (at either stage 2 or 4).
- 6.17 Successful Individual Bids will be awarded 50 Matter Starts for the subject to successfully passing verification (at either stage 2 or 4).

Stage 2 – Verification (if applicable)

- 6.18 If an Applicant has submitted verification information with their Individual Bid(s) the LAA will verify an Applicant's Individual Bid(s) at this stage in accordance with the process set out in Section 8 of this IFA.

Stage 3 – Contract award (subject to verification)

- 6.19 All Applicants will be notified of the outcome of their Tender through the e-Tendering message board. Notifications to Applicants whose Tender is unsuccessful will include details of why their Tender is unsuccessful.
- 6.20 The LAA intends to notify Applicants of the outcome of their Tender in early March 2021.

Stage 4 – Verification

- 6.23 Applicants who have not already concluded the verification process at Stage 2 of the tender assessment process and are notified that they have been successful in this procurement process will be required to verify their Tender following the verification process detailed at Section 8 of this IFA.

SECTION 7: NOTIFICATION OF TENDER OUTCOMES

- 7.1 The LAA will notify Applicants whose SQ Response has been assessed as unsuccessful in accordance with the timetable set out earlier in this IFA at page 3.
- 7.2 Where unsuccessful, Applicants will be notified of the outcome of their SQ Response through the e-Tendering system message board. Notifications to those Applicants will include reasons why their SQ Response has been assessed as unsuccessful.
- 7.3 Where an Applicant's SQ Response is assessed as unsuccessful the Applicant's ITT response will not be assessed, unless any appeal made by the Applicant is successful.
- 7.4 The sole right of appeal is set out in paragraph 9.40 of this IFA. The sole right of appeal applies to the outcome of the LAA's assessment of an Applicant's SQ Response as unsuccessful.
- 7.5 Where the LAA assesses an Applicant's SQ Response as being successful, the ITT Response submitted by the Applicant will then be assessed and Applicants will be notified in accordance with the timelines set out in this IFA.

SECTION 8: VERIFICATION OF HOUSING AND DEBT INDIVIDUAL BIDS

- 8.1 All successful Applicants will be required to verify their Individual Bid(s) and all Contract awards will be conditional on Individual Bid(s) being satisfactorily verified by the LAA. Details of the verification requirements are set out at Annex D of this IFA. Verification information must be provided at the latest by 23:59 on 16 March 2021.
- 8.2 Applicants will have the opportunity to submit verification information with their Tender.
- 8.3 Where an Applicant does not submit compliant verification information with their Tender, requests for verification information will be sent to Applicants at the same time as they are notified that they have been successful. They must submit verification information no later than 23:59 on 16 March 2021. If verification is successfully concluded an Applicant's Contract documents will be uploaded to enable them to deliver Contract Work awarded under this procurement process from 1 April 2021.
- 8.4 It is the Applicant's sole responsibility to ensure they provide us with all the necessary information to evidence they meet the relevant verification requirements no later than 23:59 on 16 March 2021.
- 8.5 Where the Applicant has not submitted information in accordance with the verification process for an Individual Bid by 23:59 on 16 March 2021, then the award in respect of that Individual Bid may be withdrawn as applicable.
- 8.6 For the avoidance of doubt, if it becomes necessary for the LAA to withdraw the award to an Applicant for an Individual Bid as a consequence of their failure to satisfactorily verify any aspect of their Tender, the LAA shall have no responsibility whatsoever to the Applicant (or any related party) for any cost, expense or any other liability they have incurred or may incur in the course of submitting their Tender.

- 8.7 Please note, the LAA will not issue or amend any Contract Schedule with Applicants until pre-contract verification process is concluded i.e. the Applicant satisfactorily verifies information required at the latest by 23:59 on 16 March 2021.
- 8.8 In addition to meeting the verification requirements, Applicants must where relevant, provide a completed AC1 form and associated documentation for each new Office before the LAA can issue Contract documentation to an Applicant.
- 8.9 Where Applicants intend to open an Office to deliver the Contract Work tendered for, in addition to confirming the Office address and postcode, they will be required to complete and return an AC1 form and supporting documents so the new Office can be allocated a LAA Account Number and set up on the LAA systems. Applicants cannot be issued with Contract documentation or start, or be paid for, Contract Work until a completed AC1 form has been received and processed by the LAA. The AC1 form is available at: www.gov.uk/guidance/update-your-details-with-laa.

SECTION 9: GENERAL RULES OF THIS PROCUREMENT PROCESS

Introduction

- 9.1 This procurement process is governed by this IFA which represents a complete statement of the rules of the procurement process. This IFA supersedes all prior negotiations, representations or undertakings, whether written or oral. References to 'Tender' include, as applicable, any submission forming part of a Tender such as the Response to ITTs.
- 9.2 'Legal services' are classified as Social and Other Specific Services to which The Public Contracts Regulations 2015 (the "Regulations") only apply in part. The LAA is not bound by any of the Regulations except those which specifically apply to the procurement of Social and Other Specific Services.
- 9.3 This IFA and any supplementary documents issued as part of this procurement process are governed and construed in accordance with English Law.

Submitting a Tender

- 9.4 The Applicant agrees to comply with the rules (contained in this Section 9 and elsewhere in this IFA) of this procurement process, the terms of the user agreement governing the use of the LAA e-Tendering system and any contract awarded to them by the LAA (including any conditions of contract award). If the Applicant fails to comply with the rules of this procurement process and/or the terms of the user agreement, the LAA will assess the Applicant's Tender as unsuccessful.
- 9.5 The Applicant must submit a complete Tender (in accordance with paragraph 9.8) by the Deadline. For the purposes of the Deadline, the time specified on the e-Tendering system shall be the definitive time. A Tender will be rejected if it is submitted by the Applicant after the Deadline. The LAA will not consider:
- (a) any requests by the Applicant to amend or submit the Tender after the Deadline; or,

- (b) any requests by the Applicant for an extension of the time or date fixed for the submission of the Tender

and the Applicant accepts all responsibility for ensuring all parts of its Tender are submitted through the e-Tendering system by the Deadline.

- 9.6 The Applicant must submit a complete Tender (in accordance with paragraph 9.8) using the e-Tendering system at www.legalaid.bravosolution.co.uk. The LAA will not consider any Tender submitted by the Applicant in any other form, or by any other method.
- 9.7 A Tender comprising of a Response to the SQ and the Housing and Debt ITT must be authorised by one of the following:
 - (a) the Applicant's COLP, HOLP or CM; or,
 - (b) where the Applicant is not authorised by a Relevant Professional Body, a member of Key Personnel who either:
 - (i) has decision and / or veto rights over decisions relating to the running of the Applicant; or
 - (ii) has the right to exercise, or actually exercises, significant influence or control over the Applicant
- 9.8 The Applicant must submit a complete Tender prior to the Deadline. The Applicant must reply to every question in the Tender and upload all requested documentation, even if it has previously provided this information or if it is otherwise of the view that the LAA is already aware of such information.
- 9.9 The Applicant may only submit one Tender (i.e. maximum of one response to the SQ and/or Housing and Debt ITT). Where an Applicant submits more than one ITT Response to the SQ and/or Housing and Debt ITT, the LAA will assess only the last SQ and/or Housing and Debt ITT Response submitted prior to the Deadline.
- 9.10 The Applicant may amend and re-submit its Tender at any time up to the Deadline. Only the last Tender submitted by an Applicant prior to the Deadline will be considered by the LAA.
- 9.11 The Applicant must ensure that its Tender is fully and accurately completed. The Applicant must ensure that information provided as part of its response is of sufficient quality and detail that an informed assessment of it can be made by the LAA.
- 9.12 Subject to the LAA's right to clarify at paragraph 9.27, the Applicant will not be permitted to amend or alter the Tender after the Deadline except in circumstances expressly permitted by the LAA.
- 9.13 In the event of any conflict between the information, answers or responses submitted as part of a Tender, without prejudice to the other rules of the procurement process, including the LAA's right to clarify, the conflict will be resolved by accepting the information, answer or document least favourable to the Applicant. This may mean that the LAA may reject the Tender in whole or in part.

- 9.14 When providing Contract Work within Wales, the Applicant must ensure it is accessible to, and understandable by, clients whose language of choice is Welsh, in accordance with the Welsh Language Act 1993 and Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 and any other relevant statutory instruments which come into force from time to time.
- 9.15 The Applicant, by submitting a Tender, warrants to the LAA that:
- (i) it has complied with all the rules and instructions applicable to this IFA and the e-Tendering system in all respects;
 - (ii) all information, representations and other matters of fact communicated (whether in writing or otherwise) to the LAA by the Applicant are true, complete and accurate in all respects; and
 - (iii) it has capacity to concurrently deliver all of the services it has submitted a Tender for.
- 9.16 The Applicant must keep any Tender valid and capable of acceptance by the LAA up to the Contract Start Date.
- 9.17 By submitting a Tender the Applicant agrees to be bound by the Contract without further negotiation or amendment.
- 9.18 In submitting its Tender, the Applicant acknowledges the fact that Applicants may be party to no more than one 2018 Standard Civil Contract. Further the Applicant acknowledges that subject to the provisions on the holding of a single Face to Face Contract as referred to in this paragraph 9.18, this procurement process is entirely independent of any other procurement processes that have been run by the LAA or any predecessor organisation. Accordingly, no previous conduct of decisions of the LAA can be relied upon by the Applicant as setting any precedent for the LAA's conduct in respect of this procurement process.
- 9.19 The Applicant must monitor and respond as appropriate to messages received through the e-Tendering system throughout this procurement process and the LAA accepts no liability where the Applicant fails to do so. All communication with Applicants through the e-Tendering system, including that outlined in 9.20 will be deemed to have been received by the Applicant at the time of transmission in the e-Tendering system. The time specified in the e-Tendering system shall be the definitive time.
- 9.20 Any Frequently Asked Questions published through the e-Tendering system in accordance with Section 5 of this IFA will form part of the documentation for this procurement process. Applicants should have regard to the relevant Frequently Asked Questions documents prior to submitting a Tender.
- 9.21 Without prejudice to any warranties given, these rules of the procurement process do not form a separate collateral contract between the Applicant and the LAA. The Applicant's Tender will form part of any Contract subsequently awarded.

Right to Cancel or Amend the Procurement Process

- 9.22 The LAA reserves the right to amend the procurement process (including any related documentation) at any time. Any notices of amendments will be published on the LAA's website at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/civil-tender-activity-2021> and notified to individual Applicants through a message on the e-Tendering system.
- 9.23 A Tender submitted by an Applicant which does not comply with any amendments made in accordance with 9.22 before the Deadline may be rejected.
- 9.24 The LAA reserves the right to suspend or cancel the procurement process in its entirety or in part, and not to proceed to award contracts at any time at its absolute discretion.
- 9.25 While the LAA has taken all reasonable steps to ensure, as at the date of the issue of the IFA, that the facts which are contained both within it and associated documents are true and accurate in all material respects, it does not make any representation or warranty as to the accuracy or completeness or otherwise of these documents, or the reasonableness of any assumptions on which these documents may be based. If contradictory information is contained in this IFA and / or associated documents, the provisions of this Section 9 will take precedence.
- 9.26 All information supplied by the LAA to the Applicant, including that within the IFA, is subject to that Applicant's own due diligence. The LAA accepts no liability to the Applicant whatsoever resulting from the use of the IFA and any associated documents, or any omissions from or deficiencies in them.

Right to Clarify / Verify

- 9.27 The LAA may at its sole discretion seek to clarify or verify the Applicant's Tender. It will not do so where this would afford an Applicant the opportunity to improve its Tender by submitting a changed bid which would constitute a new tender. Where it does exercise its discretion to seek clarification or verification, in making its decision following receipt of an Applicant's response, the LAA will not take into account any information received which falls outside of the scope of the specific clarification or verification it is seeking.
- 9.28 Where the LAA contacts the Applicant in circumstances outlined in 9.27, the Applicant must provide the information requested by the date specified by the LAA. Any information provided by the Applicant after the specified date may not be taken into account by the LAA when evaluating the Applicant's Tender.
- 9.29 The ITTs request some non-assessed information that the LAA requires to be able to progress the issuing of contract documentation. Where this non-assessed information is not provided or is inaccurate in the Tender, the LAA may contact the Applicant for these details. If the Applicant fails to provide the accurate information requested this will not result in a Tender being unsuccessful. However, this may delay the issuing of contract documentation to an Applicant who has been successful. That may prevent the Applicant from commencing and being paid for services under the relevant contract.

Right to Exclude

- 9.30 If the LAA receives information to suggest that any aspect of the Applicant's Tender is false, misleading or incorrect in any material way it may undertake such enquiries as it considers necessary to determine the accuracy of the Tender. The Applicant must assist with any such enquiries.
- 9.31 The LAA reserves the right at its absolute discretion to disqualify from the procurement process any Applicant for submitting:
- (i) false information; and/or
 - (ii) information which misrepresents the Applicants actual position; and/or
 - (iii) misleading information.
- 9.32 Paragraph 9.30 of this IFA applies regardless of whether the information concerned was submitted with the intention of misleading the LAA or misrepresenting the Applicant's actual position or whether it was submitted recklessly, negligently or innocently.

Canvassing

- 9.33 The Applicant (including its employees and agents) must not, whether directly or indirectly:
- (a) canvass, or attempt to obtain any information from, any Ministers, officers, employees, agents or advisers of the LAA in connection with this procurement process; or
 - (b) offer or agree to pay or give any sum of money, inducement or valuable consideration to any person for doing or having done or causing or having caused to be done any act or omission in relation to this procurement process.

Collusion

- 9.34 The Applicant must not collude with any other person or organisation in any way during this procurement process. This would include, but not be limited to, the following examples:
- (a) Fixing or adjusting any element of its Tender by agreement with any other person, unless such an act would reasonably be permitted as part of this procurement process;
 - (b) Communicating to any other person any information relating to any fees or rates contained in the Applicant's Tender which will be competitively assessed as part of the procurement process, unless such communication is with a person who is a participant in the Applicant's Tender;
 - (c) Entering in to any agreement with any person for the purpose of inciting that person to refrain from submitting a Tender;

(d) Sharing, permitting or disclosing access to any information relating to its Tender.

9.35 If the LAA reasonably believes that the Applicant has colluded with another person in any way that breaches paragraph 9.34, the LAA may (without prejudice to any other criminal or civil remedies available to it) immediately exclude the Applicant from any further involvement in this procurement process.

Award

9.36 Where a material change occurs to the Tender information submitted by an Applicant, including issues relating to any current contract the Applicant holds, the Applicant must inform the LAA. The LAA will conduct a re-assessment to ensure the Tender is not adversely impacted. If upon re-assessment, the Applicant's Tender is deemed to be unsuccessful or any conditions of contract award are not met, the LAA will not proceed with any decision made to award a contract. Failure to notify the LAA of a material change may result in disqualification from the procurement process and/or termination of the contract.

9.37 The LAA reserves the right, prior to any execution of a contract, to carry out further due diligence checks as it deems necessary or appropriate. Where, as part of any due diligence, an Applicant is found not to comply with any of the minimum contract requirements which the Applicant committed to meeting in its Tender, the LAA will not proceed with any decision made to award a contract.

9.38 The LAA reserves the right to place additional contractual conditions on the award of a contract to an individual Applicant.

9.39 The award of a contract does not guarantee a minimum amount of work for the Applicant or that a minimum level of income will be generated for the Applicant as a result of that contract.

Appeal and costs and expenses of Tender

9.40 Subject to paragraph 9.43 the Applicant's sole right of appeal is limited to circumstances where it reasonably, on the information contained in the SQ Response (subject to paragraph 9.27-8), considers that the LAA has made an error in its assessment of the Applicant's SQ Response.

9.41 There is no other right of appeal, including, for example but not limited to, in respect of any mistakes, inaccuracies or errors made by the Applicant in its Tender. Where an Applicant seeks to appeal on other grounds not covered by this paragraph, any such appeal will be rejected. For the avoidance of doubt there is no right of appeal based on a purported failure of the LAA to clarify Tender information.

9.42 For the avoidance of doubt, there is no right of appeal in respect of the LAA's assessment of Housing and Debt ITT Responses.

- 9.43 Appeals must relate to the specific grounds of failure set out in the notification letter received from the LAA. Legal Aid Agency.
- 9.44 Appeals should be submitted using the appeals pro-forma which will be made available as part of their notification letter.
- 9.45 The LAA will not accept any appeal submitted after the date detailed in the notification letter for receipt of appeals.
- 9.46 The LAA's Principal Legal Adviser (or their appointed representative) will review all appeals on the papers only and make a determination on the outcome of the appeal. For the avoidance of doubt, there is no further right of appeal.
- 9.47 The Applicant is solely responsible for its own costs and expenses incurred in connection with the preparation and submission of a Tender irrespective of any subsequent cancellation or suspension of this procurement process by the LAA. Under no circumstances will the LAA, or any of its employees, be liable for any costs incurred by the Applicant.

Confidentiality, Data Protection & Freedom of Information

- 9.48 The LAA may share any information contained in an Applicant's Tender with the provider of the e-Tendering system for the purposes of administering the procurement process.
- 9.49 The Applicant should note that under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (the "FOIA") the LAA may be required to disclose details of its Tender in response to a request from third parties, either during or after the procurement process. The LAA can only withhold information where it is covered by a valid exemption as set out in the FOIA.
- 9.50 If an Applicant is concerned about possible disclosure it should contact the LAA and clearly identify the specific parts of the Tender that it considers commercially sensitive or confidential (within the meaning of the FOIA), the harm that disclosure may cause and an estimated timescale for that sensitivity. The Applicant must familiarise itself with the Information Commissioner's current position on the disclosure and non-disclosure of commercially sensitive information and accordingly should not notify the LAA of a blanket labelling of its entire Tender as confidential.
- 9.51 The Applicant must be aware that the receipt by the LAA of information marked 'confidential' does not mean that the LAA accepts any duty of confidence in relation to that marking. Neither does the LAA guarantee that information identified by the Applicant as confidential will not be disclosed where the public interest favours disclosure pursuant to the LAA's obligations under FOIA.
- 9.52 The LAA, will collect, hold and use Personal Data obtained from and about the Applicant and its Key Personnel during the course of the procurement process.
- 9.53 By submitting a Tender an Applicant consents and confirms that they have obtained all necessary consents from the relevant Data Subject to such Personal Data being processed and used in accordance with and/or for the

purposes of administering the procurement process as contemplated by the IFA, the Tender and for the management of any Contract subsequently awarded.

- 9.54 The LAA and the Applicant anticipate that the LAA shall act as a Controller and Processor in respect of any Personal Data provided to it by the Applicant as a requirement of the Tender.
- 9.55 The Applicant warrants and undertakes, as a condition of the Tender, to the LAA, on a continuing basis, that:
- (a) all requisite authority and has obtained and will maintain all necessary consents required under the Data Protection [Laws and shall not disclose, transfer or otherwise process Personal Data outside the UK without the prior written agreement of the LAA](#); and
- (b) otherwise fully complied with all of its obligations under the Data Protection Legislation, in order to disclose to the LAA the Personal Data and allow the LAA to carry out the procurement process. The Applicant shall immediately notify the LAA if any of the consents is revoked or changed in any way which affects the LAA's rights or obligations in relation to such Personal Data.
- 9.56 The Applicant agrees that it shall notify the LAA immediately if any Data Subject revokes, withdraws and/or changes their consent to the disclosure of the Personal Data to the LAA in connection with the Tender.
- 9.57 The LAA shall implement and maintain appropriate technical and organisational security measures to comply with the obligations imposed on the LAA by the Security Requirements.
- 9.58 The LAA may disclose any documentation or information submitted by the Applicant as part of a Tender, whether commercially sensitive or not, for the purposes of complying with any control and/or reporting obligations, to any other central Government Department or Executive Agency. For the avoidance of doubt, information will not be disclosed outside Government for these purposes. By submitting a Tender, Applicants consent to documentation and information being held and used for these purposes.
- 9.59 The LAA will publish details of all contracts awarded in accordance with the Government's transparency standards.
- 9.60 Following completion of this procurement process, the LAA will retain copies of the Tender for such time as it considers reasonable to satisfy the LAA's audit obligations and for any associated contract management purposes.

Copyright & Intellectual Property Rights

- 9.61 The information contained in this IFA is subject to Crown Copyright. Applicants may, subject to 9.62, re-use this document (excluding logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence v3.0. To view this licence, visit: <http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/version/3> or write to the Information policy team, The

National Archives, Kew, London, TW9 4DU, complete the online enquiry form:
<https://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/contact/contactform.asp?id=8>

- 9.62 If an Applicant uses this IFA under the Open Government Licence v3.0, it should include the following attribution: "Procurement of Housing and Debt Services in England and Wales from 1 April 2021 Invitation To Tender Information for Applicants, Legal Aid Agency, Licensed under the Open Government Licence v3.0."

ANNEX A: HOUSING AND DEBT PROCUREMENT AREAS

This Annex provides details of the Housing and Debt Procurement Areas being tendered for in this procurement process.

Applicants should check that they tender in the correct Procurement Area for their Office/Digital Service as applicable. To do this, Applicants must enter the postcode for their Office (or intended Office) into the 'Find your local council' tool on the Gov.uk website: <https://www.gov.uk/find-local-council>.

Below is a list of Procurement Areas for the purposes of the Housing and Debt ITT.

LAA Region	Housing and Debt Procurement Area	Local Authorities included in the Procurement Area
Leeds	Doncaster	Doncaster Metropolitan Borough Council
	Calderdale	Calderdale Metropolitan Borough Council
	East Riding of Yorkshire	East Riding of Yorkshire Council
	City of Kingston upon Hull	Hull City Council
Liverpool	Wirral	Wirral Borough Council
Bristol	Cornwall	Cornwall Borough Council
	Somerset	Bath and North-East Somerset Council Somerset County Council
Cambridge	North Hertfordshire	East Hertfordshire District Council North Hertfordshire District Council Stevenage Borough Council Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council
Nottingham	Leicestershire and Rutland	Leicestershire County Council Rutland County Council
Manchester	Warrington and Halton	Halton Borough Council Warrington Borough Council
South Tyneside	South Tyneside	South Tyneside Council
	Hartlepool	Hartlepool Borough Council
Birmingham	Shropshire	Shropshire Council Telford and Wrekin Council
	Sandwell	Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council

ANNEX B: SQ QUESTIONS AND ASSESSMENT

Section A – organisation and contact details

Note	All Applicants must submit a response to this Selection Questionnaire (SQ), regardless of whether they have previously submitted a SQ Response as part of any other procurement process. Applicants must ensure that they also complete and submit the Housing and Debt ITT - ITT_680 - Legal Aid Services in Housing and Debt from 1 April 2021 .	
No.	Question	Response options and assessment
A.1	Full name of Applicant including trading name(s) that will be used if successful in this procurement process	Free text
A.2	Registered or head /main office address Where the Applicant does not yet have a registered or head/main office, please enter “N/A”	Free text
A.3	Postcode of registered or head/main office address Where the Applicant does not yet have a registered or head/main office, please enter “N/A”	Free text
A.4.i	Intended trading status	Options list a) Public limited company b) Limited company c) Limited liability partnership d) Other partnership e) Sole trader f) Third sector

		g) Other
A.4.ii	If you answered "Other" to question A.4.i, please explain your trading status	Free text
A.4.iii	Will the Applicant be delivering the Contract Work as an Alternative Business Structure?	Options list: i) Yes ii) No
A.4.iv	Date of registration with Companies House or Charities Commission Where the Applicant does not yet have a registered trading status, please enter "N/A"	Free text
A.4.v	Company registration number (if applicable) If this does not apply to the Applicant, please answer "N/A"	Free text
A.4.vi	Charity registration number (if applicable) If this does not apply to the Applicant, please answer "N/A"	Free text
A.4.vii	Registered VAT number If this does not apply to the Applicant, please answer "N/A"	Free text

A.5	<p>Where the Applicant is required to provide a Personal Guarantee and Indemnity (e.g. where it is an LLP or limited company), please confirm the names of the individuals required and authorised to sign.</p> <p>An Applicant with limited liability (unless a registered charity) must supply the LAA with a properly completed indemnity when requested.</p> <p>Where the Applicant is not required to provide a Personal Guarantee and Indemnity, please answer “N/A”</p>	Free Text
A.6	<p>LAA Account Number for registered or head/main office</p> <p>LAA Account Numbers are alpha-numeric and are 6 characters long, e.g. 1A234B and can be found on the Applicant’s current LAA Contract Schedule documentation (where applicable).</p> <p>Where the Applicant does not currently have an LAA Account Number for this office, please enter “N/A”</p>	Free text
A.7.i	<p>Predecessor bodies – has the Applicant been subject to any change to its status in the three years preceding the date of its Selection Questionnaire Response submission? This may include (but is not limited to) merger, de-merger or change in legal status such as becoming a limited liability partnership.</p>	<p>Options list:</p> <p>i) Yes</p> <p>ii) No</p>
A.7.ii	<p>If you answered “Yes” to question A.7.i, please provide details of all status changes in this time period.</p>	Free text
A.8	<p>Parent companies – please list any organisation which owns more than 50 percent of the voting shares of the Applicant or has an overriding material influence over its operations (the largest individual shareholder or if they are placed in control of the running of the operation by non-operational shareholders). In your response please include:</p>	Free text

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Full name of the parent company - Registered office address (if applicable) - Registration number (if applicable) - Head office VAT number (if applicable) <p>If the Applicant does not have any parent companies, please answer "N/A"</p>	
A.9.i	<p>Does the Applicant currently hold the appropriate authorisation to provide Contract Work from one of the Relevant Professional Bodies?</p> <p>Where, in accordance with the Legal Services Act 2007, the Applicant is able to deliver reserved legal services without authorisation from a Relevant Professional Body, please answer "iii) N/A, exempt"</p> <p>Where the Applicant answers "ii) No, not currently authorised" they must obtain authorisation from a Relevant Professional Body by the deadline stipulated in the relevant ITT IFA.</p>	<p>Options list:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Yes, currently authorised (answer questions A.9.ii and A.9.iii) ii) No, not currently authorised (answer question A.10) iii) N/A, exempt (answer question A.10)
A.9.ii	<p>If the Applicant has answered "Yes" to A.9.i, which Relevant Professional Body is the Applicant authorised by?</p>	<p>Options list:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Solicitors Regulation Authority ii) Bar Standards Board iii) CILEx Regulation
A.9.iii	<p>If the Applicant has answered "Yes" to A.9.i please provide the authorisation number/reference</p>	<p>Free text</p>

A.10	Contact details for the purposes of the SQ – contact name and role within the Applicant	Free text
A.11	Contact address and postcode	Free text
A.12	Contact email address	Free text
A.13	Contact telephone number	Free text

Section B – grounds for mandatory exclusion

Where the Applicant answers “Yes” to any question within this section the LAA will exclude it from participating further in this procurement process, unless there are mitigating circumstances which the LAA deems to be satisfactory.

In the event that an Applicant answers “Yes” to any of the following questions, it must provide information in the free text box to the supplementary questions provided, outlining the circumstances including exceptional circumstances that it wishes the LAA to consider in assessing the response. If there is more than one incident, the Applicant must give the information about each incident.

	<p>If the Applicant answers “Yes” to question B.1 on convictions it may still avoid exclusion if it is able to demonstrate mitigating circumstances which the LAA deems to be satisfactory. If the Applicant is in that position, please provide details in the free text box to the supplementary question B.1(a) - (e).</p> <p>If the Applicant answers “Yes” to question B.2 on the non-payment of taxes or social security contributions, and has not paid or entered into a binding arrangement to pay the full amount, it may still avoid exclusion if only minor tax or social security contributions are unpaid or if it has not yet had time to fulfil its obligations since learning of the exact amount due. If the Applicant is in that position, please provide details in the free text boxes to the supplementary question B.2(a) - (f).</p> <p>Applicants that fail to provide the required information will be excluded. Applicants must be explicit and comprehensive in responding to these questions as this will be the single source of information that the LAA will use to decide whether or not exceptional circumstances (which may result in the LAA deciding not to reject the SQ Response) apply.</p>	
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B.1	<p>The detailed grounds for mandatory exclusion of an organisation are set out on the following webpage, which should be referred to before completing these questions: https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/551130/List_of_Mandatory_and_Discretionary_Exclusions.pdf</p> <p>Please indicate if, within the past five years the Applicant or any of its Key Personnel have been convicted anywhere in the world of any of the offences within the summary below and listed on the webpage referred to above:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Participation in a criminal organisation; b) Corruption; c) Fraud; d) Terrorist offences or offences linked to terrorist activities; e) Money laundering or terrorist financing; f) Child labour and other forms of trafficking in human beings. 	<p>Yes (Fail, subject to information in B.1(a) – (e))</p> <p>No (Pass)</p>
B.1(a)	If the Applicant has answered “Yes” in relation to Key Personnel, please give the name and position of the person(s) convicted. If the response relates to the Applicant, please enter “Relates to Applicant”	Free text
B.1(b)	Please explain which of the grounds listed the conviction was for and the reasons for conviction	Free text
B.1(c)	Please give the date of the conviction	Free text
B.1(d)	If the relevant documentation is available electronically please provide the web address, issuing authority, precise reference of the documents	Free text
B.1(e)	Have measures been taken to demonstrate the reliability of the Applicant despite the existence of a relevant ground for exclusion? If so, please give details of the steps taken by the Applicant.	Free text
B.2	Within the past five years has the Applicant or any of its Key Personnel been established by a judicial or administrative decision having final and binding effect in accordance with the legal provisions of any part of the	Yes (Fail, subject to information in B.2(a) – (f))

	<p>United Kingdom or the legal provisions of the country in which the organisation is established (if outside the UK), to be in breach of obligations related to the payment of tax or social security contributions?</p> <p>Please note that if the Applicant is a new organisation which does not yet have obligations relating to payment of social security and taxes, it should still answer the question above in relation to its Key Personnel.</p>	No (Pass)
	If the Applicant has answered "Yes" to question B.2, it must give details by answering questions B.2(a)– (f) below.	
B.2(a)	Please give the name and position of the person(s) involved. If the response relates to the Applicant, please enter "Relates to Applicant"	Free text
B.2(b)	Please explain what the obligations were, which the Applicant or any of its Key Personnel has failed to meet, including the name of the social security contribution or tax, the date(s) it fell due and the date of the binding decision referred to in B.2 above.	Free text
B.2(c)	Please confirm that you have paid the outstanding sum (including the date paid in full) or give the value of unmet obligation(s)	Free text
B.2(d)	If the social security contribution or tax relates to the Applicant, please confirm the percentage value of the unmet obligation(s) of the Applicant's annual turnover. If the social security contribution or tax relates to Key Personnel, please enter "N/A".	Free text
B.2(e)	<p>Please give details of any binding agreement to fulfil the obligation(s) with a view to paying, including, where applicable:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the date the agreement was made; and - any accrued interest and/or fines; and - the date by which the amount(s) were or will be repaid. <p>If no agreement is in place, please enter "No agreement"</p>	Free text
B.2(f)	Please attach evidence of the binding agreement reached, where appropriate. Where you do not have evidence of a binding agreement there is no need to attach a document.	Attachment

Section C – grounds for discretionary exclusion

The LAA may exclude Applicants that submit a response designated as ‘discretionary fail’ to any one of the following questions but will consider the exceptional circumstances submitted by Applicants.

In the event that an Applicant submits a response designated as ‘discretionary fail’ to any of the following questions, it must provide information in the free text box to the supplementary questions provided, outlining the circumstances including exceptional circumstances that it wishes the LAA to consider in assessing the response. If there is more than one incident, the Applicant must give the information about each incident.

Applicants that fail to provide the required information will be excluded. Applicants must be explicit and comprehensive in responding to these questions as this will be the single source of information that the LAA will use to decide whether or not exceptional circumstances (which may result in the LAA deciding not to reject the SQ Response) apply.

	<p>The detailed grounds for discretionary exclusion of an organisation are set out on the following webpage, which should be referred to before completing these questions: https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/551130/List_of_Mandatory_and_Discretionary_Exclusions.pdf</p> <p>Unless a different time period is specified in any question, please indicate if, within the past three years, anywhere in the world any of the following situations have applied to the Applicant or any of its Key Personnel.</p>	
C.1	Breach of environmental obligations, breach of social obligations and/or breach of labour law obligations?	<p>Yes (discretionary fail)</p> <p>No (pass)</p>
	Exceptional circumstances – if the Applicant has answered “Yes” to question C.1 it must give details by answering questions C.1(a) - (d) below.	
C.1(a)	Please give details about the nature of the event(s) leading to this violation	Free text
C.1(b)	Please give details about the nature of the violation and any sanction applied	Free text
C.1(c)	Please give the date when the violation occurred	Free text

C.1(d)	Please confirm any steps taken to ensure there is no repeat of the circumstances leading to a violation	Free text
C.2	<p>Is/has the Applicant or any of its Key Personnel at this organisation or any of its predecessor bodies or at any previous organisation (been):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bankrupt; or • the subject of insolvency; or • the subject of winding-up proceedings, where the assets are being administered by a liquidator or by the court, or where its business activities are/have been suspended; or • entered into a pre-pack administration arrangement; or • entered into an arrangement with creditors. For the avoidance of doubt this includes the imposition of Individual Voluntary Arrangements (IVA) or Company Voluntary Arrangements (CVA); or • it is/has been in any analogous situation arising from a similar procedure under the laws and regulations of any State? 	<p>Yes (discretionary fail)</p> <p>No (pass)</p>
	Exceptional circumstances – if the Applicant has answered “Yes” to question C.2, it must give details by answering questions as appropriate below.	
C.2(a)	<p>Where it relates to the Applicant please enter “Relates to Applicant”.</p> <p>Where this relates to a member of your Key Personnel please give the name and position of the person(s) involved.</p>	Free text
C.2(b)	Is/has the Applicant or any member of its Key Personnel either at this organisation or any previous organisation (been) the subject of an IVA or a CVA as a result of the non-payment of taxes or social security contributions?	<p>Yes (Answer C.2(c) to C.2(i))</p> <p>No (Answer C.2(j) to C.2(n))</p>
C.2(c)	Have/Are the outstanding taxes or social security contributions been/being repaid in full as a result of the imposition of the IVA or CVA? If yes, please also confirm the date they were/will be repaid in full.	Free text
C.2(d)	Please provide the value of the IVA or CVA when entered into	Free text
C.2(e)	What proportion of the outstanding taxes or social security contributions has been/will be repaid through the IVA/CVA, expressed as a percentage?	Free text

C.2(f)	Please provide the date on which the IVA or CVA was entered into	Free text
C.2(g)	<p>Where the IVA or CVA has been subject to any rescheduling of repayments, please provide:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • details of what changes were agreed, including the date when the rescheduling occurred; and • confirmation of changes to the repayment amount (including the amount the repayments were changed from); and • confirmation of any change to the date of discharge (including the original date of discharge). <p>Where the IVA or CVA has not been subject to any rescheduling of repayments please enter "N/A".</p>	Free text
C.2(h)	When is the IVA or CVA due to be discharged?	Free text
C.2(i)	<p>On what dates do each of the next payments of taxes and social security contributions for which the Applicant or any of its Key Personnel is liable fall due?</p> <p>For the avoidance of doubt this includes, but is not limited to, Income Tax, PAYE, National Insurance contributions, Corporation Tax and VAT.</p>	Free text
C.2(j)	Have all payments of taxes and social security contributions for both the Applicant and each of its Key Personnel following the imposition of the IVA/CVA been met?	<p>Yes</p> <p>No (Answer C.2(k) to C.2(n))</p>
C.2(k)	<p>Where the Applicant has answered "No" to C2(j), please provide details of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the type liability owing (which tax or social security contribution); and - to whom the liability relates (either Applicant or provide the name and position of the person(s) involved); and - the amount of the outstanding liability; and - the date on which the amount became due; and - whether there is a binding agreement in place to repay the amount. 	Free text
C.2(l)	Please give details of the type of event and the date on which it occurred	Free text

C.2(m)	Please give details about the situation, including the amount of money involved and the date when the issue arose	Free text
C.2(n)	Please give details about any measures the Applicant has taken to ensure that the situation is resolved and confirm the current position on repayments including the date by which the amount will be repaid.	Free text
C.3	Issued with a County Court Judgment (“CCJ”) under which liabilities will not be discharged by the Contract Start Date?	Yes (discretionary fail) No (Pass)
	Exceptional circumstances – if the Applicant has answered “Yes” to question C.3, it must give details by answering questions C.3 (a) - (e) below.	
C.3(a)	If the Applicant has answered “Yes” in relation to Key Personnel, please give the name and position of the person(s) involved. If the response relates to the Applicant, please enter “Relates to Applicant”	Free text
C.3(b)	Please give the date(s) when the incident(s) occurred leading to the CCJ(s), and the date when the CCJ(s) was/were issued	Free text
C.3(c)	Please give details of the situation, including the amount owed, resulting in the CCJ(s) being issued	Free text
C.3(d)	Please give details of any written plan in place to discharge these liabilities including the date by which the amount(s) will be repaid	Free text
C.3(e)	Please give details about any measures the Applicant has taken to ensure that similar situations will not arise in the future	Free text
C.4	Guilty of professional misconduct or has been referred to a disciplinary body following allegations of grave professional misconduct, or has been disqualified as charity trustee?	Yes (discretionary fail) No (pass)
	Exceptional circumstances – if the Applicant has answered “Yes” to question C.4, it must give details by answering questions C.4 (a) - (e) below.	
C.4(a)	If the Applicant has answered “Yes” in relation to Key Personnel, please give the name and position of the person(s) involved. If the response relates to the Applicant, please enter “Relates to Applicant”	Free text

C.4(b)	Please give the date when the event(s) occurred	Free text
C.4(c)	Please confirm the nature of the event(s) leading to the finding or allegations of grave professional misconduct or disqualification	Free text
C.4(d)	Please give: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the date that the finding of grave professional misconduct/disqualification was made. If no finding has been made to date, please give the date of any disciplinary body hearing date if known; detail of any sanction applied; and which body made the finding of guilt / is investigating the allegations 	Free text
C.4(e)	Please give details about any measures the Applicant has taken to ensure that there is no repeat of the circumstances leading to the finding or allegations of grave professional misconduct or disqualification.	Free text
C.5	Entered into agreements with other economic operators aimed at distorting competition?	Yes (discretionary fail) No (pass)
	Exceptional circumstances – if the Applicant has answered “Yes” to question C.5, it must give details by answering questions C.5 (a) - (d) below.	
C.5(a)	If the Applicant has answered “Yes” in relation to Key Personnel, please give the name and position of the person(s) involved. If the response relates to the Applicant, please enter “Relates to Applicant”	Free text
C.5(b)	Please give the date when the event(s) occurred	Free text
C.5(c)	Please confirm the nature of the event(s) leading to an agreement with other market operators aimed at distorting competition	Free text
C.5(d)	Please give details about any measures the Applicant has taken to ensure that there is no repeat of the circumstances leading to the distortion of competition.	Free text
C.6	Aware of any conflict of interest within the meaning of regulation 24 of the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 due to the participation in the procurement procedure or been involved in the preparation of the procurement procedure?	Yes (discretionary fail)

		No (pass)
	Exceptional circumstances – if the Applicant has answered “Yes” to question C.6, it must give details by answering question C.6(a) below.	Free text
C.6(a)	Please describe the nature of the conflict, including how this might be perceived to compromise the Applicant’s impartiality and independence in the context of the procurement procedure.	Free text
C.7	Shown significant or persistent deficiencies in the performance of a substantive requirement under a prior public contract (other than with the LAA), a prior contract with a contracting entity, or a prior concession contract, which led to early termination of that prior contract, damages or other comparable sanctions? The Applicant must also answer “Yes” to this question if any of its Key Personnel worked as Key Personnel at another organisation that has had a contract terminated (other than by the LAA) within the last three years.	Yes (discretionary fail) No (pass)
	Exceptional circumstances – if the Applicant has answered “Yes” to question C.7, it must give details by answering questions C.7(a) - (h) below.	
C.7(a)	Please give the name of the organisation with whom this contract was held	Free text
C.7(b)	Please give the date on which this contract commenced	Free text
C.7(c)	Please give the value of the contract and the time period for which the full contract was due to run	Free text
C.7(d)	Please confirm the nature of the sanction that was applied	Free text
C.7(e)	Please give the date when the early termination/damages/comparable sanction took effect	Free text
C.7(f)	If the Applicant has answered “Yes” in relation to Key Personnel working at a previous organisation, please confirm the name of the member of Key Personnel and the organisation to which the termination relates. If the termination relates to the Applicant, please answer "Relates to Applicant"	Free text
C.7(g)	Please confirm the reason for the early termination/damages/comparable sanction	Free text
C.7(h)	Please confirm any steps taken to ensure there is no repeat of the circumstances leading to the early termination/damages/comparable sanction	Free text

C.8	<p>Had any contract with the LAA or its predecessor body terminated in whole or in part within the last five years (not restricted to civil contracts), or is it currently in receipt of a notice to terminate?</p> <p>The Applicant must also answer “Yes” to this question if any of its Key Personnel worked as Key Personnel at another organisation who has had a contract with the LAA or its predecessor body terminated in whole or in part within the last five years or is currently in receipt of a notice to terminate.</p> <p>For the avoidance of doubt, do not answer “Yes” if the termination was by the LAA in accordance with its “no fault” termination rights.</p>	<p>Yes (discretionary fail)</p> <p>No (Pass)</p>
	<p>Exceptional circumstances – if the Applicant has answered “Yes” to question C.8, it must give details by answering questions C.8(a) - (f) below.</p>	
C.8(a)	<p>Please indicate whether the Applicant’s termination or notice to terminate relates to the whole contract or a particular Category of Law.</p> <p>If the termination relates to a particular Category of Law, please state which.</p>	Free text
C.8(b)	<p>Please give the date when the termination took effect/notice to terminate was received</p>	Free text
C.8(c)	<p>If the Applicant has answered “Yes” in relation to Key Personnel working at a previous organisation, please confirm the name of the member of Key Personnel and the organisation to which the termination/notice to terminate relates. If the termination/notice to terminate relates to the Applicant, please answer "Relates to Applicant"</p>	Free text
C.8(d)	<p>Please confirm the reason for the termination/notice to terminate</p>	Free text
C.8(e)	<p>If the Applicant has received a notice to terminate, please tell us what has happened since the notice was received, and what stage the Applicant is at in any appeal process. If the appeal process has concluded, or the Applicant chose not to appeal, please confirm the outcome of the appeal or that the Applicant chose not to appeal, as appropriate.</p>	Free text
C.8(f)	<p>Please confirm any steps taken to ensure there is no repeat of the circumstances leading to the notice to terminate or termination</p>	Free text
C.9	<p>Received either: a) two consecutive Peer Review ratings of 4; or b) two consecutive Peer Review ratings of 5,</p>	Yes (discretionary fail)

	<p>in any Category of Law following the outcome of any appeal in the last 5 years?</p> <p>The Applicant must also answer “Yes” to this question if any of its Key Personnel received two consecutive Peer Review ratings of 4 or a Peer Review rating of 5 whilst working as Key Personnel at another organisation in the last 5 years.</p>	No (Pass)
	<p>Exceptional circumstances – if the Applicant has answered “Yes” to question C.9, you must give details by answering questions C.9 (a) - (d) below.</p>	
C.9(a)	Please confirm the Category(ies) of Law in which the Peer Review rating(s) have been received	Free text
C.9(b)	Please confirm the Peer Review rating(s) received	Free text
C.9(c)	Please give the dates when you were notified of the relevant Peer Review rating(s)	Free text
C.9(d)	Please confirm any steps taken to ensure there is no repeat of the circumstances leading to the Peer Review rating(s)	Free text
C.10	<p>Has anyone in your organisation received notification from the LAA that they may not conduct publicly funded work under an LAA Contract?</p> <p>For the avoidance of doubt this includes any Civil, Crime, VHCC, CLA, HPCDS or Exceptional Case Contract.</p> <p>Any individual who has received notification from the LAA that they may not conduct publicly funded work under an LAA Contract may not conduct publicly funded work under a 2018 Standard Civil Contract.</p> <p>Where that individual is a member of your Key Personnel, the Applicant may be excluded from the procurement process, subject to an assessment of the questions below</p>	<p>Yes (discretionary fail)</p> <p>No (pass)</p>
	<p>Exceptional circumstances – if the Applicant has answered “Yes” to question C.10, you must give details by answering questions C.10(a) - (h) below.</p>	
C.10(a)	Please provide the full name(s) of the individual(s) who have been notified that they may not conduct publicly funded work under an LAA contract?	Free text

C.10(b)	Is/are the individual(s) a member of Key Personnel?	Option: Yes No
C.10(c)	Please confirm the job title(s) of the individual(s) who has/have been notified that they may not conduct publicly funded work under an LAA contract	Free text
C.10(d)	Please provide the date on which the individual(s) was/were notified	Free text
C.10(e)	Please provide details of the events which led to the individual(s) being excluded from conducting publicly funded work under an LAA contract.	Free text
C.10(f)	Please provide a copy of the letter sent by the LAA informing the Applicant/individual(s) of this restriction	
C.10(g)	What action has the Applicant undertaken to ensure that the individual does not conduct publicly funded work under an LAA contract?	Free text
C.10(h)	What action has the Applicant and/or individual undertaken to ensure that the events which led to the individual excluded from conducting publicly funded work under an LAA contract does not occur again?	Free text
	Please answer the following statements:	
C.11	The Applicant — (i) is/has been guilty of serious misrepresentation in supplying the information required for the verification of the absence of grounds for exclusion or the fulfilment of the selection criteria; or (ii) has withheld such information or is not able to submit supporting documents required under regulation 59 of the Public Contracts Regulations 2015	Yes (discretionary fail) No (pass)
	Exceptional circumstances – if the Applicant has answered “Yes” to question C.11, it must give details by answering questions C.11(a) - (e) below.	

C.11(a)	Please give the name of the contracting authority from whom your organisation withheld/misrepresented information	Free text
C.11(b)	Please confirm the nature of the affected contract(s)	Free text
C.11(c)	Please give the date when the event(s) occurred	Free text
C.11(d)	Please confirm the action taken by the contracting authority as a result of the Applicant withholding/misrepresenting information	Free text
C.11(e)	Please confirm any steps taken to ensure there is no repeat of the circumstances leading to the Applicant misrepresenting/withholding information	Free text
C.12	The Applicant or any of its Key Personnel has influenced the decision-making process of the contracting authority to obtain confidential information that may confer upon the organisation undue advantages in the procurement procedure, or negligently provided misleading information that may have a material influence on decisions concerning exclusion, selection or award.	Yes (discretionary fail) No (pass)
	Exceptional circumstances – if the Applicant has answered “Yes” to question C.12, it must give details by answering questions C.12(a) - (e) below.	
C.12(a)	Please give the name of the contracting authority(ies) affected	Free text
C.12(b)	Please confirm the nature of the affected contract(s)	Free text
C.12(c)	Please give the date when the event(s) occurred	Free text
C.12(d)	Please confirm the action taken by the contracting authority as a result of the Applicant’s action	Free text
C.12(e)	Please confirm any steps taken to ensure there is no repeat of the circumstances leading to undue influence/undue advantage/negligently or materially influencing procurements and/or contracting authorities	Free text
C.13	Have any of the Applicant’s Key Personnel (irrespective of which organisation they were working for) received any conditions on their practising certificates imposed by a regulatory body, Relevant Professional Body or Complaints Body within the last three years?	Yes (discretionary fail)

		No (Pass)
	Exceptional circumstances – if the Applicant has answered “yes” to question C.13, it must give details by answering questions C.13(a) – (e) below.	
C.13(a)	If the Applicant has answered “Yes” in relation to Key Personnel, please give the name and position of the person(s) involved.	Free text
C.13(b)	Please give details about the nature of the event(s) leading to the imposition of the condition(s), including the date when the event(s) occurred	Free text
C.13(c)	Please give details of the condition(s) that were imposed, including the date they were imposed	Free text
C.13(d)	Please give details of the nature of any current condition(s) on practising certificates	Free text
C.13(e)	Please confirm any steps taken to ensure there is no repeat of the circumstances leading to the imposition of condition(s)	Free text
C.14	Is the Applicant a relevant commercial organisation as defined by section 54 ("Transparency in supply chains etc.") of the Modern Slavery Act 2015 ("the Act")?	Yes (Answer C.14(a)) No (Pass)
C.14(a)	If you have answered yes to question C.14 are you compliant with the annual reporting requirements contained within Section 54 of the Act 2015?	Yes (pass) (Answer C.14(b)) No (discretionary fail)
C.14(b)	Please provide the relevant URL to view the statement	Free text
	Exceptional circumstances – if the Applicant has answered “No” to question C.14(a), it must give details by answering question C.14(c) below.	

C.14(c)	Please provide all relevant information for the LAA to consider your exceptional circumstances including why you are currently not compliant and what steps are being taken to become compliant with the Act. Please provide timescales for activity to be completed.	Free text
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Section D – Declaration

I give my undertaking that I am either

- the Compliance Officer for Legal Practice (COLP) or the individual intending to be the COLP where the Applicant is or intends to be authorised by the Solicitors Regulation Authority (SRA); or
- the Head of Legal Practice (HOLP) or the individual intending to be the HOLP where Applicant is or intends to be authorised by the Bar Standards Board (BSB); or
- the Compliance Manager (CM) or the individual intending to be the CM where Applicant is or intends to be authorised by CILEx Regulation (CILEx); or
- where the Applicant is not (and will not be) authorised by the SRA, the BSB or CILEx, a member of Key Personnel who either (i) has decision and / or veto rights over decisions relating to the running of the Applicant; or (ii) has the right to exercise, or actually exercises, significant influence or control over the Applicant;

and so authorised to make this submission on behalf of the Applicant and confirm that the answers submitted in this Selection Questionnaire Response are correct. I understand that the information will be used in the process to assess the Applicant’s suitability to be offered a 2018 Standard Civil Contract with authorisation to undertake Housing and Debt Contract Work.

I understand that the LAA may conduct verification checks and may reject this Selection Questionnaire Response if there is a failure to answer all relevant questions fully or the information provided is inaccurate in any material way.

	Question	Response Type
D.1	Name of the individual making declaration on behalf of the Applicant	Free text

D.2	Status within the Applicant organisation	Option List: i) COLP or intended COLP ii) HOLP or intended HOLP iii) CM or intended CM iv) Key Personnel
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ANNEX C: HOUSING AND DEBT ITT Questions and Assessment

The questions below are replicated in the Housing and Debt ITT contained in the e-Tendering system.

Section A: Individual Bid details

	Question	Response Type
Note	Applicants must submit a response to the Selection Questionnaire for this procurement process (available at ITT 677) in addition to this Housing and Debt ITT	
A.1.i	Please confirm the Procurement Area in which you wish to deliver Housing & Debt Services	Options List
Note	Where the Applicant indicates that it is tendering to deliver Contract Work from multiple Procurement Areas, it will then be required to enter the relevant details as applicable for a second Procurement Area. It will then be asked to indicate whether it wishes to deliver work from another Procurement Area and give the details, and so on for up to 5 Offices. Where an Applicant wishes to tender to deliver Contract Work from more than 5 Offices, it must contact the LAA in accordance with paragraph 4.22 of the IFA.	
A.1.ii	Is the Applicant intending to deliver Housing and Debt Contract Work in another Procurement Area?	Options list: Yes No
A.2.i	On what basis does the Applicant intend to deliver Housing and Debt Services in this Procurement Area? The Office and Permanent Presence definitions are set out in sections 2.33-2.40 of the 2018 Standard Civil Contract Specification https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/standard-civil-contract-2018 .	Options list: Permanent Presence in the Procurement area (answer A.2.ii – A.2.v)

		Digital Service (answer A.2.vi – A.3.vi)
Note	Applicants bidding to deliver Housing and Debt Services from a Permanent Presence in the Procurement Area must have at least one Office in England and Wales in the relevant Procurement Area which meets the Permanent Presence requirements set out in the 2018 Standard Civil Contract Specification.	
A.2.ii	If the Applicant knows the address for the Office from which it intends to deliver Services in this Procurement Area please enter the Office address (excluding postcode). Where you do not yet know the address for this Office please enter 'N/A'	Free text
A.2.iii	If the Applicant knows the postcode for the Office from which it intends to deliver Services in this Procurement Area please enter the Office postcode. Where you do not yet know the postcode for this Office please enter 'N/A'.	Free text
A.2.iv	If the Applicant currently delivers legal aid contract work from the Office from which it intends to deliver Services in this Procurement Area please enter the LAA Account Number for this Office. LAA Account Numbers are alphanumeric and are 6 characters long, e.g. 1A234B and can be found on the Applicant's current LAA Contract Schedule documentation. Where you do not currently have a LAA Account Number for this Office please enter 'N/A'.	Free text
A.2.v	Please provide the name(s) of the nominated Supervisor(s) you intend to supervise Housing and Debt Contract Work for this Individual Bid.	Free Text
Note	Applicants must have at least one Office in England and Wales which is a Permanent Presence from which they will deliver Services in respect of a Digital Service	

A.2.vi	<p>If the Applicant knows the address for the Office from which it intends to deliver Digital Services in this Procurement Area please enter the Office address (excluding postcode).</p> <p>Where you do not yet know the address for this Office please enter 'N/A'</p>	Free Text
A.2.vii	<p>If the Applicant knows the postcode for the Office from which it intends to deliver Digital Services in this Procurement Area please enter the Office postcode.</p> <p>Where you do not yet know the postcode for this Office please enter 'N/A'.</p>	Free Text
A.2.viii	<p>If the Applicant currently delivers legal aid contract work from the Office from which it intends to deliver Digital Services in this Procurement Area please enter the LAA Account Number for this Office.</p> <p>LAA Account Numbers are alphanumeric and are 6 characters long, e.g. 1A234B and can be found on the Applicant's current LAA Contract Schedule documentation.</p> <p>Where you do not currently have a LAA Account Number for this Office please enter 'N/A'.</p>	Free Text
Note	<p>Delivery Plan for this Procurement Area</p> <p>Applicants bidding to deliver advice through a Digital Service must detail how they intend to deliver services within the relevant Procurement Area from 1 April 2021. To be successful in this tender Applicants must be able to assess whether any service adaptations or reasonable adjustments are required for clients and be prepared to deliver in person, face to face advice if needed, either themselves or through an Agent.</p> <p>Applicants must be able to give satisfactory assurance of how they will provide an effective service to clients.</p>	
A.3.i	<p>Making appointments</p> <p>Please provide your plan for ensuring Clients based within the Procurement Area will be aware of the service and how they can make appointments.</p>	Free Text x 3 boxes

	<p>In your answer you should provide the following information:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • how you will make sure Clients based within the Procurement Area know that services are available • how Clients will make appointments • what support will be available to Clients to help make appointments. Please include details of any local legal advice organisations you propose to use to signpost Clients to the service 	
A.3.ii	<p>Delivering advice</p> <p>Please provide your plan for how you will deliver the Digital Service</p> <p>In your answer you should provide the following information:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the names of the Caseworker(s) and/or Supervisor (s) who will provide advice. • how the advice will be provided. Please set out the IT/technology solutions which will be available to provide advice. • how you will assess whether any service adaptations or reasonable adjustments are required for clients and how you will ensure a client can receive in-person advice if needed. • how you will support or ensure support with using digital platforms is given to clients who need it. • how cases will be progressed or how additional appointments required will be undertaken by the provider, including how you will undertake Legal Representation if required. 	Free Text x3 boxes
A.3.iii	<p>Local links</p> <p>Please provide your plan for how you will ensure that you have an effective process for accepting referrals from other organisations. In your answer you should provide the following information:</p>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • what links you already have or intend to create with local legal advice organisations in order to build a signposting and referral network • How, if relevant, those organisations will be used to assist Clients with making appointments and/or attending meetings with you <p>Where you do not already have links in place please outline the steps you will take to establish effective links with relevant organisations in the Procurement Area.</p>	
A.3.iv	<p>Agents</p> <p>Where it is necessary to deliver Face to Face advice in person via an Agent, please give the name and address of the Agent(s) you intend to use.</p> <p>Where you have not already identified legal advice organisations which may act as your Agent, please set out how you will do this and the timescales for doing so.</p>	Text
A.3.v	<p>Supervision</p> <p>Please set out how you will ensure effective Supervision of Contract Work delivered through the Digital Service</p>	Free Text
A.3.vi	<p>Please provide the name(s) of the nominated Supervisor(s) you intend to supervise Housing and Debt Contract Work for this Individual Bid.</p>	Free Text

Section B – Verification information

Note	<p>An Applicant may submit verification with its ITT Response, where it chooses to do so it must submit all the information required to verify its ITT response, except Office address(es).</p> <p>In accordance with paragraph 8.3 where an Applicant does not submit compliant verification information with their Tender, requests for verification information will be sent to Applicants at the same time as they are notified that they have been successful. They must submit verification information no later than 23.59 on 16 March 2021. If verification is successfully concluded an Applicant's Contract documents will be uploaded to enable them to deliver Contract Work awarded under this procurement process from 1 April 2021.</p>	
Note	<p>Applicants are not required to provide evidence of their Office(s) as part of this 'Verification information' section of questions. However, Applicants must provide their Office address and postcode by no later than 23:59 on 16 March 2021.</p>	
	Question	Response Type
B.1.i	<p>Does the Applicant wish to provide compliant verification information as part of its ITT Response?</p> <p>Please note, an Applicant answering 'Yes' to question B.1.i will be required to provide all the information required to verify its ITT Response.</p>	<p>Yes (answer C.1.ii – C.1.vii)</p> <p>No</p>
B.1.ii	<p>Please provide the Applicant organisation's SRA number, BSB number or CILEx Regulation ID.</p>	Free text
B.1.iii	<p>Please provide the Applicant's Lexcel Certificate or SQM Certificate, valid at 1 April 2021</p>	Attachment
B.1.iv	<p>The Applicant must employ at least one FTE Supervisor that meets the requirements of the Contract and the Supervisor Standard in the Housing and Debt Categories of Law.</p>	Attachment

	<p>Please provide at least one compliant Supervisor Declaration Form each Supervisor in the Housing & Debt Category of Law.</p> <p>Where an Applicant wishes to submit more than one Supervisor Declaration Form for one or more of its Individual Bids, the completed Supervisor Declaration Forms must be merged into a single document and the single document uploaded as an attachment.</p> <p>As set out at paragraph 2.26 of the 2018 Standard Civil Contract Specification, a Supervisor may supervise at a maximum of two Offices or across two Providers with one Office each.</p> <p>The Supervisor Declaration Form template is available to download from: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/standard-civil-contract-2018.</p>	
B.1.v	<p>The Applicant must employ at least one PTE Authorised Litigator with experience of carrying out cases within the Housing & Debt Categories of Law.</p> <p>Please provide the Authorised Litigator's name and roll number.</p>	Free text

Section C – Warranties and Declaration

By completing and submitting this Housing and Debt ITT Response, the Applicant confirms that it will meet the following requirements by the Contract Start Date to be awarded a Face to Face Contract and confirms it will evidence that it meets these requirements by 23.59 on 16 March 2021:

- Will be authorised by a Relevant Professional Body. For the avoidance of doubt this does not preclude non-solicitor entities from applying. Individuals applying to hold the Face to Face Contract must have all necessary licenses and authorisations to conduct Contract Work by the Contract Start Date; and
- Will hold a relevant Quality Standard; and
- Will have at least one Office in England and Wales which meets the Permanent Presence requirements set out in the 2018 Standard Civil Contract Specification; and

- Will employ at least one Full Time Equivalent (FTE) Supervisor who meets the Supervisor Standard in the Housing and Debt Category; and
- Will meet the one FTE Supervisor: four FTE caseworkers ratio at each Office or for each Digital Service from which it is tendering to deliver Housing and Debt Contract Work; and
- Will employ at least one PTE Authorised Litigator with experience of delivering Housing and Debt cases, who will be available to each of its Offices or Digital Services to deliver Licensed Work
- Will have either an Office that is either a Permanent Presence in the Procurement Area or a plan to deliver Digital Services in each Procurement Area in which it is tendering to deliver Housing and Debt Contract Work

By completing and submitting this Housing and Debt ITT Response I give my undertaking that I am either:

- the Compliance Officer for Legal Practice (COLP) or the individual intending to be the COLP where the Applicant is or intends to be authorised by the Solicitors Regulation Authority (SRA); or
- the Head of Legal Practice (HOLP) or the individual intending to be the HOLP where the Applicant is or intends to be authorised by the Bar Standards Board (BSB); or
- the Compliance Manager (CM) or the individual intending to be the CM where the Applicant is or intends to be authorised by CILEx Regulation (CILEx); or
- where the Applicant is not (and will not be) authorised by the SRA, the BSB or CILEx, a member of Key Personnel who either (i) has decision and / or veto rights over decisions relating to the running of the Applicant; or (ii) has the right to exercise, or actually exercises, significant influence or control over the Applicant;

and am authorised to make this submission on behalf of the Applicant and that the answers submitted in this ITT Response are correct. I understand that the information will be used in the process to assess the Applicant’s suitability to be offered a Face to Face Contract for Contract Work in the Housing and Debt Categories of Law. I understand that the LAA may conduct verification checks and may reject this ITT Response if there is a failure to answer all relevant questions fully or the information provided is inaccurate in any material way. I understand the LAA will verify my Tender and I will be required to evidence the information and warranties in the Applicant’s Tender, including in this ITT Response, by 23.59 on 16 March 2021.

D.1	Name of individual making declaration on behalf of the Applicant	Free text
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D.2	Status within the Applicant organisation	Option List: i) COLP or intended COLP ii) HOLP or intended HOLP iii) CM or intended CM iv) Key Personnel
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ANNEX D: INFORMATION THE LAA WILL REQUEST TO VERIFY APPLICANTS' SUCCESSFUL HOUSING AND DEBT TENDERS

Applicants should note that the LAA may seek evidence of employment where the same individual is named by different Applicants. This is to determine that the conditions of tender and the Contract are met. For example, if two Applicants were reliant on the same FTE Supervisor to meet the Tender requirements the LAA may seek evidence of the basis upon which each individual organisation employs this individual. The LAA reserves the right to request this evidence during verification and after the Contract Start Date.

Applicants will have the opportunity to submit their verification information with their Tender.

Where an Applicant does not submit compliant verification information with their Tender, requests for verification information will be sent to Applicants at the same time as they are notified that they have been successful. They must submit verification information no later than 23.59 on 16 March 2021. If verification is successfully concluded an Applicant's Contract documents will be uploaded to enable them to deliver Contract Work awarded under this procurement process from 1 April 2021.

An Applicant which is notified of our intention to award them a Face to Face Contract to conduct Contract Work in the Housing and Debt Categories of Law and where must be able to demonstrate it meets the following minimum requirements at the latest by 23:59 on 16 March 2021:

Verification which will be requested from all Applicants who are successful in tendering to deliver Housing and Debt Contract Work	
What the LAA will verify	What evidence will be required
The Applicant holds appropriate authorisation to deliver legal services from a Relevant Professional Body See paragraph 2.16 for further information	Confirmation of the Applicant's SRA or BSB number or CILEx Regulation ID Where, in accordance with paragraph 2.16, transitional provisions apply to an Applicant, they must confirm this in their verification response
The Applicant holds a valid Quality Standard See paragraph 2.7 – 2.15 for further information on Quality Standards	Lexcel Certificate or SQM Certificate, valid at 1 April 2021. Where the Applicant has passed the desktop SQM audit only, a copy of the relevant letter of confirmation must be provided
The Applicant has at least one Office in England and Wales that meets the permanent presence requirements.	Full address including postcode for the Office and, if applicable, the Office's current LAA account number.
The Applicant employs at least one Full Time Equivalent (" FTE ") Supervisor who meets the Supervisor Standard and supervises Housing and Debt Contract Work <u>only</u> .	At least one compliant Supervisor Declaration Form for each Supervisor in the Housing and Debt Categories of Law.
The Applicant meets the one FTE Supervisor: four FTE caseworkers ratio at each Office delivering Housing and Debt Contract Work under the Face to Face Contract, this includes where a Supervisor is concurrently supervising two categories of law.	A LAA Contract Management and Assurance visit will be conducted to confirm compliance within six months of the Contract Start Date

Each Office from which the Applicant is applying to conduct in person Face to Face Contract Work is in the relevant Procurement Area	Full address including postcode for the Office and, if applicable, the Office's current LAA account number
The Applicant employs at least one PTE Authorised Litigator with experience of delivering Housing and Debt cases	Authorised Litigator name and roll number

ANNEX E: GLOSSARY OF DEFINED TERMS

Term	Description
2018 Standard Civil Contract	Contract Work awarded under this procurement process will be undertaken in accordance with this Contract. Contract documentation can be found at
AC1 form	The form that must be used for an Applicant to apply for a LAA account number for an Office. The AC1 form is available from: https://www.gov.uk/guidance/update-your-details-with-laa
Act of Assistance	An occasion on which a Provider delivers Contract Work to a Client in accordance with the requirements of the Specification
Applicant	A single legal entity (including an individual) Tendering to deliver the advertised services.
Authorised Litigator	An individual who conducts litigation services as an authorised person in accordance with the Legal Services Act 2007
Bar Standards Board/BSB	Bar Standards Board; a Relevant Professional Body
Category, Categories or Categories of Law	The category or categories of law, which are publicly funded legal services being tendered for and listed in this IFA, the definitions of which are set out in the Category Definitions 2018
Category Definitions 2018	The document published on the LAA's website that outlines the Categories of Work that apply to this Specification, which is incorporated into this Contract.
CILEx	Chartered Institute of Legal Executives; a Relevant Professional Body
Client	An individual whom the Legal Aid Agency Director (or a person authorised by the Director) or the court has determined qualifies for the receipt of Contract Work
CM	Compliance Manager for an organisation authorised by CILEx
COLP	Compliance Officer for Legal Practice for an organisation authorised by the SRA.
Contract for Signature	The document of that name issued by the LAA and signed by the LAA and the Applicant in relation to this Face to Face Contract.
Contract Manager	An individual employed with LAA's Contract Management and Assurance department with responsibility for managing relationships with Providers.
Contact Period	Has the meaning given in the Contract for Signature
Contract Specification	Services that may be performed for clients as specified in the Schedule(s) and the Specification under or by virtue of the Civil Contracts covered by this procurement process.
Contract Start Date	The date from which the Provider must deliver the Face to Face Contract Work, being 1 April 2021
Contract Work	As defined in Section 1 of the Contract Specification and regulation 2 of the Procedure Regulations
Controlled Work	As defined in Section 1 of the Contract Specification and regulation 2 of the Procedure Regulations
Controlled Work and Administration ("CWA")	A digital billing service that contains all Providers' contracts and schedules
Crown Copyright	As defined under section 163 of the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988
Data Protection Laws	Means (a) any law, statute, declaration, decree, directive, legislative enactment, order, ordinance, regulation, rule or other binding restriction (as amended, consolidated or re-enacted from time to time) which relates to the protection of individuals with regards to the processing of personal data

	including, but not limited to, the Data Protection Act 2018 and the UK GDPR; and (b) any code of practice or guidance published by the ICO from time to time.
Data Subject	As specified in the UK GDPR
Deadline	The deadline to submit a Tender under this process which is 5pm 18 February 2021.
Designated Signatories	The user 'role' within CWA system which is able to accept, reject or query contract offers
Digital Service	Face to Face advice delivered through digital media in an individual Procurement Area from an Office in England and Wales which meets the Permanent Presence requirements.
e-Tendering system	The LAA's secure internet site at www.legalaid.bravosolution.co.uk through which Tenders and the procurement process as a whole are managed.
Executive Agency	A body tasked with carrying out executive functions within government
Face to Face Contract	The 2018 Standard Civil Contract
FAQ or Frequently Asked Questions	Questions with corresponding responses as published by the LAA and termed 'Frequently Asked Questions'
Full Time Equivalent (FTE)	<p>The equivalent of one individual working 5 days a week and 7 hours on each such day (excluding breaks). For example the following working pattern would represent on Full Time Equivalent:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Person A – 20 hours per week - Person B - 10 hours per week - Person C – 5 hours per week <p>One FTE is based on a 35 hour working week. Applicants are not permitted to claim an individual member of staff as more than one FTE even if they work more than 35 hours per week</p>
HOLP	Head of Legal Practice for an organisation authorised by the BSB
Housing and Debt	As set out in the 'Category Definitions 2018' guide published on our website
Housing and Debt Contract Work	Services to be delivered under a legal aid contract in accordance with the requirements of the Contract
Individual Bid	A bid for Housing and Debt Contract Work in a particular Procurement Area
Information for Applicants ("IFA")	This Information for Applicants document (in its entirety)
Housing and Debt Invitation to Tender (Housing and Debt ITT)	The ITT for the Housing and Debt Face to Face Contract
ITT Response	An Applicant's response to an ITT as part of this procurement process
Key Personnel	<p>Any individual who has or is held out as having either expressly or impliedly, or exercises, (or will have, be held out as having or exercising by the Contract Start Date) powers of representation, decision, veto, influence or control in relation to an Applicant including partners, directors, trustees and other senior managers and employees of the Applicant.</p> <p>Where a trust or company would satisfy the above in relation to an Applicant, any individual who has the right to exercise significant influence or control over the activities of that trust or company.</p>
LAA Account Number	The unique reference assigned to each provider Office from which legal aid work is undertaken
Lead Office	The Applicant's principal Office for the purpose of the Face to Face Contract
Legal Aid	Has the meaning given to it in Part 1 of the Legal Aid, Sentencing and Punishment of Offenders Act 2012

Legal Aid Agency or LAA	The Executive Agency of the Ministry of Justice that from 1 April 2013 has been responsible for the administration of legal aid (including this procurement process)
Legal Competence Standards	As detailed in the relevant Category Specification
Lexcel Practice Management standard ("Lexcel")	The Law Society's legal practice quality mark, which is a relevant Quality Standard
Lexcel Certificate	Certification evidencing that an entity holds the Lexcel Quality Standard
Licensed Work	Has the meaning given in regulation 2 of the Procedure Regulation. Generally covers legal representation. There is no limit to the volume of Licensed Work a provider can undertake. However, funding applications need to be submitted to the LAA for each Licensed Work case and the LAA decides whether the relevant criteria are met.
Matter Start	A Controlled Work case as defined at Section 1 of the Face to Face Contract Specification
Minister	A member of the House of commons or House of Lords who is chosen by the Prime Minister to be responsible for the actions of their departments
Office	As defined at paragraph 2.32 of the 2018 Standard Civil Contract General Specification
Permanent Presence	As defined at 2.33 - 2.34 of the 2018 Standard Civil Contract Specification
Personal Data	As defined in the UK GDPR
Processing	As defined in the UK GDPR
Processor	As defined in the UK GDPR
Procurement Area	A geographical area in which the LAA will procure Housing and Debt Contract Work
Provider	A party to a contract with the LAA in respect of the provision of Legal Aid.
Part Time Equivalent (PTE)	As defined at 2.36 - 2.37 of the 2018 Standard Civil Contract Specification
Quality Standard	The LAA Specialist Quality Mark (SQM) or the Law Society's Lexcel Practice Management Standard (Lexcel).
Relevant Professional Body	The body or organisation which regulates or exercises control over your professional or service activities or such activities of any of your personnel and/or any other body to whose rules you have elected to be subject to. For the avoidance of doubt this includes any relevant approved regulator for the purposes of the Legal Services Act 2007
Remuneration Regulations	The Civil Legal Aid (Remuneration) Regulations 2013
Response	An Applicant's response to the ITT as part of this procurement process
Roll Number	The number or SRA ID given to all solicitors admitted by the Law Society of England and Wales
Schedule	A Contract document issued by the LAA as specified in the 2018 Standard Civil Contract
Security Requirements	The requirements regarding security of Personal Data, as set out in the Data Protection Laws
Selection Questionnaire or SQ	The Selection Questionnaire for 2018 Contracts.

Solicitors Regulation Authority or SRA	Solicitors Regulation Authority; a Relevant Professional Body
Specification	The 2018 Standard Civil Contract Specification, as amended, which sets out the nature of the Contract Work to be delivered.
Standard Terms	The contractual document which governs the commercial relationship between the Legal Aid Agency and providers
Supervisor	Any person employed by the Applicant who meets the Supervisor Standard set out in the Specification, and who will be actively supervising the Contract Work tendered for
Supervisor Declaration Form	A form setting out how the Applicant's Supervisor(s) meets the Supervisor Standard in the relevant Category of Law. Forms are available to download from https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/standard-civil-contract-2018 .
Supervisor Standard	The required supervision experience, Category-specific case experience and Category-specific case involvement that any Supervisor must meet and which is evidenced via the Supervisor Declaration Form.
Supplementary Matter Starts	As defined at Section 1 of the General Specification
Tender	An Applicant's complete response to this procurement process. This must consist of a response to the SQ and one Housing and Debt ITT Response.
UK GDPR	The General Data Protection Regulation (EU) 2016/679 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 27 April 2016 on the protection of natural persons with regard to the processing of personal data and on the free movement of such data (United Kingdom General Data Protection Regulation), as it forms part of the law of England and Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland by virtue of section 3 of the EU (Withdrawal) Act 2018.