



Legal Aid
Agency

Procurement Process for DDAS Services at Derwentside IRC from 1 July 2022 Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

Many questions will be answered by the information given in the Information for Applicants document (IFA), which is available on the Tenders page of our website:

[Civil tender activity 2022 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/civil-tender-activity-2022)

The deadline for questions about the IFA or the tender was **23:59 7 April 2022** (note this is referred to as the “End date for supplier clarification messages” on the e-Tendering system). We are therefore unable to answer questions received after that deadline.

Questions that we consider to be of interest have been collated and answered centrally in writing to ensure that all interested parties have equal access to information in the answers. These questions and answers have been published in this FAQ document.

Technical Questions on how to use the e-Tendering system

There is a Helpdesk to provide technical support to Applicant Organisations using the e-Tendering system. However, the Helpdesk is **unable** to assist you with problems with your own computer hardware or systems. For these types of issues, you should contact your usual IT support.

Questions should be emailed to the following email address: help@bravosolution.co.uk. Alternatively, the telephone number for the Helpdesk is 0800 069 8630 (lines are open from 9am to 6pm Monday to Friday).

The Helpdesk remains open until the tender closes. However, we recommend that you start to complete your tender early so that you identify any areas where you might need technical help as soon as possible, as the Helpdesk is likely to be very busy in the days leading up to the tender deadline and cannot guarantee that queries received close to the tender deadline will be dealt with in time.

The deadline for receipt of Tenders is 12 noon on Monday 25 April 2022.

Q1. Can an existing firm with a 2018 immigration legal aid contract bid for the Derwentside contract from a new office which they will open if awarded the contract?

Yes, as set out at paragraph 2.29 of the Information For Applicants (IFA, current Immigration & Asylum providers (i.e. holds a 2018 Standard Civil Contract with authorisation to deliver Contract Work in the Immigration & Asylum Category of Law) may bid for Contract Work from either:

- i. an existing Office located in any Access Point; or
- ii. a new Office located in any Access Point.

Q2. Will a new firm who is awarded a contract at Derwentside (and therefore also a 2018 Immigration contract) have only the pro-rata NMS allocated for the DDAS work or will they be given an allocation of NMS to use more generally?

Yes. Paragraphs 1.35 and 1.38 set out the matter starts allocations for DDAS and Immigration and Asylum available respectively through this procurement process. Paragraph 1.39 confirms successful Applicants will be able to deliver up to the volume of Immigration and Asylum matter starts awarded, in addition to the Contract Work awarded to deliver the DDAS at Derwentside.

Q3. Does the female caseworker have to be based at the office from which the bid for the Derwentside contract is made?

No. As set out at paragraph 2.21, Applicants must employ at least one PTE female caseworker who is IAAS accredited to at least the level of Senior Caseworker and who can be deployed to deliver this service if requested. There is no requirement for the female caseworker to be based at the office from which the bid for the Derwentside contract is made.

Q4. Does the solicitor have to be based at the office from which the bid for the Derwentside contract is made?

Yes. As set out in paragraph 3.36, Applicants must be able and willing to undertake the full range of Licensed Work in the Immigration and Asylum Category of Law. To demonstrate this Applicants must employ least one Part Time Equivalent (PTE) Authorised Litigator with experience of delivering Immigration & Asylum cases at the Office from which they are bidding.

Q5. How can a firm which does not currently hold a LA contract meet the supervisory requirements with regard to having experience of making Exceptional Case Funding applications? Would it suffice for such a firm to have attended a recent training course?

All Applicants are required to demonstrate the requisite skills/knowledge of their Supervisor in respect of obtaining grants of ECF for an out-of-scope immigration matter in compliance with the Derwentside IRC Immigration & Asylum Supervisor Standard. The ability to demonstrate examples of a Supervisor having obtained a grant of Exceptional Case Funding (ECF) for an out-of-scope immigration matter is not limited to existing Providers that currently hold a legal aid contract, as set out in relevant guidance available at [Legal aid: apply for exceptional case funding - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/legal-aid-apply-for-exceptional-case-funding). Relevant experience of a Supervisor can include examples of obtaining a grant of ECF for an out-of-scope immigration

matter whilst that Supervisor not employed by the Applicant organisation, provided such examples are from the last 24 months.