Request for Proposals:
Independent assessment on the economic, environmental and social impacts from the non renewal of gamebird shooting leases on land owned by United Utilities.

Release Date: 02/10/2023

Issuer: [redacted]

Bidder Response Date: 06/11/2023

United Utilities
Grasmere House
Lingley Mere Business Park
Great Sankey
Warrington
Cheshire
WA5 3LP

02/10/2023

Dear Bidder,

Request for Proposals – Independent Impact Assessment

By participating in this RFP (Request For Proposals) you are indicating your acceptance to be bound by the guidelines set out in this document and attachments. We have provided the key details of United Utilities' requirements, which you should take into account in your response. Please acknowledge, via email, receipt of this document within two working days together with confirmation of your intention to respond to this RFP.

Please direct any questions regarding the RFP content or process through email. You should not contact any personnel unless directed to do so as all communications will be handled via email. United Utilities reserves the right to disqualify and reject proposals from Bidders who do not comply with guidelines presented in this document. All questions should be submitted via email.

I look forward to receiving your response.

Kind Regards,

[redacted]

This document is proprietary to United Utilities and the information contained herein **is confidential**.

Without United Utilities prior written permission, this document, either in whole or part, must not be reproduced in any form or by any means or disclosed to others or used for the purposes other than its evaluation by the Bidder. It may not be disclosed to any third party outside of the agreed Confidentiality Agreement with regard to 'Permitted Recipients'.

Whilst care and attention has been exercised in the preparation of this document, it remains subject to contract and all warranties whether express or implied by statute, law or otherwise are hereby disclaimed and excluded.

These limitations are not intended to restrict continuing business discussions United Utilities and the invited bidder.

Any proposal received by United Utilities is subject to contract.

As part of this RFP process United Utilities makes no obligations in any way to:

(i) pay any Bidder for any RFP response; or (ii) award the contract with the lowest bid; or

(iii) accept any RFP information received from Bidders; or

(iv) include Bidders responding to this RFP, in any future invitation; or
(v) any other commitment to Bidders whatsoever

1. Introduction & Overview

1.1 Company Background

United Utilities is the UK's largest listed water company. Through its subsidiary, United Utilities Water Limited, it manages the regulated water and wastewater network in the North West of England, providing services to around seven million people and businesses. United Utilities delivers around 1,700 million litres of safe clean drinking water to customers every day through 43,000km of water pipes. In addition the company owns approximately 57,000 acres of land, predominately for the catchment of raw water. We collect and treat wastewater from three million homes and 200,000 businesses using our 79,000km of sewers and recycle the wastewater at over 580 wastewater treatment works.

United Utilities purpose is to provide great water for a stronger, greener and healthier North West. Our business model enables us to deliver on our purpose both now and into the future. More details can be found at: https://www.unitedutilities.com/corporate/about-us/what-we-do/our-purpose/

1.2 Background to the Request for proposals

Building on decades of successful habitat restoration, we recently reviewed the way we manage our land to ensure we are fully focused on using our catchments to manage water quality, quantity and mitigate flooding, which are of strategic importance to us as we respond to the challenges of climate change.

Following this review and to ensure we can focus on those areas, UU made a decision to not renew shooting leases where we own the rights and we own the land.

The changes proposed follow a decision made some time ago not to issue any such leases on a long-term basis. Stepping away from leasing shooting rights as they come to their natural expiry dates over the next few years, provides an opportunity to work with stakeholders to change the land management approach and support the delivery of this long-term objective for increased catchment resilience. This descision does not cover 3rd party sporting rights holders and these rights remain unchanged

1.3 Requirements Summary

In July 2023, as part of an update to our land management policies to ensure we meet our water quality and quantity objectives given external pressures such as climate change, we identified 6,000 hectares that we will be restoring for nature and biodiversity.

On a further 12,000 hectares of land in our sole ownership and responsibility, we began to extend that work to improve catchment resilience, including plans to not renew around 20 licenses for game bird shooting as they came to their end.

Since that initial announcement, we have received representations on behalf of local rural communities about the potential impact this decision might have.

In response to these representations, we are instigating an independent impact assessment process to fully understand the environmental, economic and social impact of any proposals to ensure we minimise the impact on livelihoods and maximise the opportunities available.

We will seek to identify how, for each lease, we can best balance our commitment to improving water resilience whilst minimising the impact on individual communities and the environment.
For each of United Utilities' shooting leases, we require the successful bidder to undertake an independent impact assessment for each of these parcels of land and produce a number of reports summarising the findings.

We have identified three groups of stakeholders that will play a key part in this independent review:

- Shooting tenants
- Agricultural tenants/partners
- Selected stakeholders

To inform the assessment an information gathering exercise will be required with these three different groups. It will seek evidence on the specific impacts (economic, social and environmental) that will be experienced as a result of changes in UU's approach on a lease by lease basis.

To ensure the credibility of the assessment the impact should be evidence based and be relevant to the specific geographical context in which the tenant operates on UU land holding. We are committed to ensuring this review is independent and evidence based and will be conducted fairly and consistently to ensure all appropriate representations are heard.

Further details of these requirements are provided in Appendix A.

2. Timetable for Procurement Process (these dates relate tothe procurement process only and not to the completion of the review and this scope of work)

Date:	Description:
04.10.2023	Confirmation of receipt of this document
09.10.2023	Intent to bid notification (via email) deadline
17.10.2023	Clarification submission deadline
18.10.2023	Clarification response (by UU) deadline
06.11.2023	Deadline for submission
13.11.2023	Confirmation of shortlisted bidders
16.11.2023	Shortlisted bidders' presentation of proposals
24.11.2023	Proposed award date to select independent reviewer

3. Contact Information

Name / Role	Telephone	Email
[redacted]	[redacted]	[redacted]

4. Respondent Instructions

This section provides detailed instructions to be followed in responding to this RFP.

The aim of this RFP is to:
(a) Ensure Bidders are provided with information to submit their proposal;

(b) Encourage Bidders to be as creative as possible when preparing their proposal; and

(c) Consider all proposals in a fair and equitable manner.

In order to achieve these aims it is important that certain ways of working are adhered to throughout.

4.1 RFP Clarifications

Questions relating to clarification of the RFP will only be accepted via email to the contact listed above quoting the RFP title in the subject of the email. Likewise, all responses from United Utilities will be issued via email and may also be made available to other Bidders (subject to confidentiality).

In the event that any answer materially affects the RFP, an amendment to the original requirement will be escalated to all Bidders. United Utilities will attempt to answer any question within two working days of receipt of that request; otherwise it will respond within that timescale notifying you of the estimated time to obtain the information.

4.2 RFP Details

United Utilities reserves the right to modify the provisions of this RFP at any time prior to the scheduled date for written responses. Additional scope and requirements can be added. Notification of such changes will be provided to all Bidders.

By submitting a response, you are committing to an understanding that you understand the requirement and have sufficiently addressed all aspects of the RFP and that you have checked all stated details to be correct and as intended.

All quoted prices are binding, each quotation will be considered as a formal offer to supply the specified service at the price shown. We reserve the right to select Bidders based on the criteria detailed in this document. Being the lowest bidder is no guarantee of winning the business.

All information supplied by United Utilities in this RFP to date, and any further information supplied during the process is subject to confidentiality.

4.3 Stage 1 RFP Submission

Bidders are required to submit their responses to this RFP by 6th November 2023 via email to [redacted] and [redacted]

UU reserves the right to disregard any response submitted after the deadline. You are expected to supply all required information, or clearly state the reason for being unable to do so. Any assumptions used in preparing responses should be clearly stated.

Following review and evaluation at stage 1, the Company reserves the right to directly negotiate with any Bidder(s) prior to shortlisting Bidders and progression to Stage 2.

4.4 Stage 2 Bidder Presentations

Following stage 1, selected Bidders will be invited to present their proposals to United Utilities. Each Bidder will be allocated a 60 minute (maximum) time slot, during which they will be required to give a presentation on their proposal to the selection panel, outlining their suitability and intended approach followed by a Q&A discussion. We can be flexible on how the 60 minute time allocation is used by you and the times stated are a suggestion but it is highly recommended that you leave adequate space for questions.

Presentations timeslots are to be 16th November 2023.

Bidders are asked to keep the timeslots available as placeholders at this stage. Bidders will be informed of successful or unsuccessful progression to Presentation by 6th November 2023. At this stage Bidders will be advised of a timeslot they have been allocated.

Following review and evaluation at stage 2, the Company reserves the right to directly negotiate with any Bidder(s) prior to Award.

5. Required Information – RFP submission

Provided below are the key headings under which your RFP submission should be structured.

5.1 Executive Summary

- A summary of your key proposal proposition.
- Bidder name (Trading and Registered).
- A brief summary your suitability, experience and independence
- A brief summary of existing and historic client list / portfolio of relevant work.

5.2 Proposal

How you propose to deliver on our requirements set out in appendix A. This should include:

- Outline of the methodology to be followed to gather the evidence base and engage with the various stakeholders and tenants.
- An outline of how you propose to set a threshold for the quality of representation you will take into account with an indication of the thresholds to be set.
- Explain how you will ensure you have independence of opinion
- What dependencies would you have on United Utilities to deliver against your plan
- High-level project plan with timelines of how you aim to achieve the requirements set out

6. Evaluation Criteria

The evaluation criteria will be based upon the following aspects of the Bidder's proposals (not in order of significance):

- The proposal should demonstrate independence and suitability
- The Bidder should demonstrate the skills and experience relevant to the proposal and their ability to interact with multiple stakeholders and assimilate and independently evaluate evidence
- The Bidder must be able to provide an indicative view of how they see their proposal developing over the term of the project
- Commercial – Pricing Schedule Appendix B

7. General Commercial Requirements

7.1 General Requirements

Bidders should note that the tender documents should be used for the sole purpose of the competition and should not be retained if unsuccessful.

7.2 Technical and Progress Reporting, Scope changes, Invoice Approval

Regular technical and programme reporting is required to demonstrate delivery and to report any risks/issues being encountered. This will also act as the scope review mechanism, should any queries on scope arise and will also be the approval process, prior to any invoices being submitted for payment.

7.3 Payment Terms

As per United Utilities Services Terms and Conditions.

7.4 Agreement

The agreement is subject to United Utilities Services Terms and Conditions.

Appendices

Information provided to Bidders in order to assist in the preparation of RFP responses
We have included the following documents to assist you in preparation of your response to this RFP:

Appendix A – Scope of Requirements
Appendix B – Pricing schedule

Appendix A

Whilst there are many views on how land should be managed, our priority is to ensure our plans provide a safe and secure supply of high quality drinking water and reduce the risk of flooding in our communities in the context of the challenges faced due to climate change.

We require an independent impact assessment covering the economic, environmental and social impacts from the non renewal of gamebird shooting leases on land owned by the company.

Information will need to be gathered to inform that assessment which should focus on seeking evidence from affected tenants, partners and stakeholders with an interest in United Utilities' land holding and be gathered on a lease by lease basis.

It is important to note that this review does not include 3rd party sporting rights to our land. These remain unchanged and are not covered by this review.

To ensure the credibility of the assessment, the impact on leaseholds should be evidence based and relevant to the individual geographical context for each specific gamebird shooting leases on UU land holding. It should be focused purely on the North West and only on UU's drinking water catchments where shooting leases are being exercised in our name. It should recognise, for example, UU's no burning policy on its land, therefore any conservation/wildfire risk benefit associated with burning techniques undertaken by the shooting community on other land holdings should not be taken into account as these practices are already not allowed on our land due to their impacts on water quality.

The following three groups of stakeholders have been identified as those affected by, or with an interest in, our land strategy decision and should be invited to contribute to the independent reveiw, noting participation by tenants and stakeholders is not compulsory and as such do not have to offer evidence for consideration or engage in the process if they do not wish to. The three groups are:

a) 20 shooting tenants
b) 32 Agricultural Tenants who operate on the same catchment land. In addition to partners and affected neighboring land owners
c) 12 Wider Stakeholders representing a variety of views including [redacted], [redacted], [redacted], [redacted], [redacted], [redacted], [redacted], [redacted], [redacted], [redacted], [redacted], [redacted], [redacted] and [redacted]. Please note that if other relevant stakeholders present themselves during the review, they should be evaluated and considered.

The purpose of this independent assessment is to understand the impact our decision to no longer renew associated leases will have on those stakeholders directy affected and the impact should be assessed on a lease by lease basis.

- This is not an open consultation to the general public, visitors or broader stakeholders. It is an impact assessment for those stakeholders affected by the decision we have made regarding renewal of shooting leases.

- Additional participants, beyond those identified above, are welcome to contribute where they have relevant experience, relevance in the United Utilities' North West/Drinking Water catchments and active land ownership/management where the independent reviewer accepts that the stakeholder is impacted by decisions and the quality of representation is of a minimum standard. We therefore would like to understand the price in your proposals if the number of stakeholders varies from the numbers provided above.

- Recognising there could be a lack of independent scientific evidence in some areas, it will be for the independent reviewer to reflect this fairly into the process. The assessment should be based on the economic, environmental and social impacts relevant to the individual leases for the company's North West water catchments. This is not intended to be an academic or science based study into the sutability of broader land management interventions across the UK.

- The independent reviewer will be expected to set a threshold for the quality of evidence related to specific impacts that they will take into account and articulate how the threshold will be set.

Independent Impact Assessments

This section sets out the requirement for three groups to be impact assessed, covering shooting leaseholders, agricultural tenants/partners and other stakeholders. This shall be delivered alongside meeting the general requirements described in this RFP.

a. Leaseholders - Shooting Tenants

Undertake an independent impact assessment (economic, environmental and social) for each of United Utilities' shooting leases (gamebird) as a result of the decision to no longer renew these leases.

A thorough information gathering exercise will be required to inform that assessment which should include seeking evidence from affected tenants (No.20).

A separate report for each of United Utilities shooting tenants will be produced in the context of the specific geography pertaining to the lease. Each report should:

- set out what activities are undertaken by the tenant associated with their shooting lease and additional activities undertaken on UU land;
- set out the scale and impact of those activities from an environmental, social and economic perspective; and
- articulate the environmental, social and economic impacts for each individual tenant from the cessation of gamebird shooting leases when licences expire.

Whilst we would hope that all tenants will participate, should they choose not, that is acceptable. The offer of inclusion in this process and the reasons for non participation should be noted.

b. Partners & Agricultural Tenants

Undertake a specific independent impact assessment (economic, environmental and social) for each of United Utilities' agricultural tenants [No.32] who may be impacted by the decision to no longer renew associated leases.

An additional assessment needs to be undertaken that seeks to understand the impact (economic, environmental and social) for United Utilities partners who operate on associated UU catchments and also contiguous land owners where the cessation of shooting may impact on land management of the wider landscape.

A separate report for each catchment [No. 12] including each of United Utilities' agricultural tenants, catchment partners and contiguous land owners. Each report should:

- set out what activities are undertaken by the shooting tenant that has an impact on the agricultural tenant's / partner / land owners operations;
- set out the scale and impact of those activities from an environmental, social and economic perspective; and
- articulate the environmental, social and economic impacts for each individual agricultural tenant / partner / land owner from the cessation of gamebird shooting leases when licences expire.

Whilst we would hope that all partners and agricultural tenants will participate, should they choose not to participate, that is acceptable. The offer of inclusion in this process and the reasons for non participation should be noted.

c. Other Stakeholders

We are seeking evidence from a list of pre-agreed stakeholders [No. 12] who have made specific representations to us. These stakeholders typically represent broader interest groups and issues.We encourage any relevant parties to share their views and evidence and should such stakeholders present themselves during the review, they should be evaluated and considered if their contributions are relevant, align with the sope of the review and meet the quality threshold.

The report should conider their representatuons and:

- articulate the environmental, social and economic impacts following the cessation of gamebird shooting leases on our land.

Overall Summary Of Output

Each report should summarise the data and evidence collated and the rational for including that evidence within the author's conclusions based on quality and legitimacy of that data/evidence in the context of UU's land holding.

Each report should make conclusions for United Utilities in the production of their land management plans.

Each report should set out what activities are undertaken by the tenant as part of any shooting lease including the scale and impact of those activities from an environmental, social and economic perspective.

Each report should articulate the environmental, social and economic impacts following the cessation of gamebird shooting leases.

To ensure the credibility of the assessment, the impact should be evidence based and be relevant to the specific geographical and operational context on UU's land holding where each lease operates.

APPENDIX B

Pricing Schedule – Please provide a lump sum value for the fulfilment of the above requirements and scope.