

Contact:

info@realschemes.org.uk

0207 981 0875



Provision of independent assessment services to check REAL CCS and BCS Approved Laboratories' performances.

Tender Invitation Document

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This document sets out the scope of work that Renewable Energy Assurance Limited (REAL) wishes to commission. REAL invites a tenderer/s through a competitive process and this document describes that process and explains how tenderers may tender for the work described.

PURPOSE & SCOPE OF THE WORK

The purpose of the work is for one or several independent auditors (number not specified) to provide independent checks of REAL Approved Laboratories for conformance with the Compost Certification Scheme (CCS) and Biofertiliser Certification Scheme (BCS) terms and conditions (T&Cs) for Approved Laboratories¹. The selected independent auditors will assess REAL CCS and BCS Approved Laboratories on behalf of REAL, to verify their compliance with the REAL CCS and BCS T&Cs.

TENDER TIMETABLE

Deadline for receipt of tender submissions: **Wednesday 14th June 2023**

Deadline for questions in relation to this tender: **Monday 29th May 2023**

REAL may invite the tenderer to present their proposal during w/c Monday 24th July and w/c Monday 31st July 2023 at REAL offices (London)

Tenderers receive written notification of REAL's decision: **Friday 18th August 2023**

REAL reserve the right to change the timetable.

WORK PROGRAMME

Contracted independent auditor; preparation and induction: **January 2024**

Contract Length: **Two years**

Contract terminates: **31st December 2025**

CONFIDENTIALITY

The information supplied in this Tender Invitation Document has been supplied in good faith and in confidence. It should not be used for any purpose other than those described and should not be disclosed to any other third party unless prior approval has been granted by REAL.

¹ Terms and conditions for laboratories approved to undertake the testing of compost/digestate under the Compost Certification Scheme/Biofertiliser Certification Scheme aligned to PAS 100/PAS 110 and the Compost Certification Scheme/Anaerobic Digestate Quality Protocol

Contents

- 1. INTRODUCTION4
- 2. BACKGROUND AND SCOPE OF WORK4
- 3. THE TENDER SUBMISSION – INFORMATION REQUIRED5
- 4. EVALUATION CRITERIA7
- 5. APPLICATION PROCEDURE8
- 6. TENDER PROCESS AND TIMETABLE8

1. INTRODUCTION

Renewable Energy Assurance Ltd (REAL) is a wholly owned subsidiary of the Association for Renewable Energy and Clean Technology (REA). REAL carries out a range of certification and consumer protection activities all of which promote renewable energy and the circular economy. Renewable Energy Assurance Ltd's activities fall under three headings: consumer codes, certification schemes and other schemes.

REAL's certification schemes include, but are not limited to, the Compost Certification Scheme (CCS) and the Biofertiliser Certification Scheme (BCS).

This document sets out the scope and parameters of the work which REAL wishes to commission and describes how contractors may tender to undertake this work for REAL.

REAL wish to appoint an independent auditor/s to inspect REAL CCS and BCS Approved Laboratories for conformance with the REAL CCS and BCS T&Cs for Approved Laboratories.

2. BACKGROUND AND SCOPE OF WORK

The Publicly Available Specifications for composted materials (BSI PAS 100:2018) and whole digestate, separated liquor and separated fibre (BSI PAS 110:2014) are crucial components for maintaining market confidence in compost and digestate quality, consistency and safety. REAL owns and administers the CCS and BCS aligned to PAS 100:2018 and PAS 110:2014.

PAS 100/PAS 110 require routine sampling and testing of the materials produced (see Tables 3 and 4 in Section 13 of PAS 100/Table 1 in Section 11 of PAS 110 for details of the testing required). There are three laboratories approved by REAL under CCS and two laboratories approved under BCS, to test compost and digestate for participants of the Schemes. A list of laboratories approved under the CCS and BCS can be found within the [Compost](#) and [Biofertiliser](#) Schemes' websites.

Confidence in the testing services provided by such laboratories is imperative if the credibility in the Certification Schemes and confidence in certified composts and digestates is to be maintained.

There are a set of terms and conditions (T&Cs) for Laboratories Approved to undertake testing under the CCS and BCS. The latest version of the T&Cs updated in January of 2023 are available on the [CCS](#) and [BCS](#) websites.

These T&Cs set out the respective responsibilities of REAL and the Approved Laboratories. The latter include:

- performance targets
- provisions for samples transport, storage, and preparation
- participation in inter-laboratory trials, spot-checks and proficiency testing schemes
- reporting of test results

When approved by REAL, a laboratory agrees to comply with the terms and conditions set out in this agreement at all times.

REAL is planning to appoint independent auditor/s who will audit the laboratories' premises on an annual basis and check that they comply with this set of terms and conditions.

2.1 Requirements or Services

- 2.1.1 The appointed independent auditor/s will undertake a routine audit of each approved laboratory to check its conformance with the T&Cs. It is anticipated that such audits will take place once a year.
 - 2.1.2 In terms of test method witnessing, the audits should focus on the Scheme specific tests. For CCS, these are physical contaminants, compost stability and plant response. For BCS, these are physical contaminants and residual biogas potential (RBP)/digestate stability.
 - 2.1.3 Audits will be carried out on first appointment and then once a year. Ideally all laboratories will be audited over the same 3-month window every year.
 - 2.1.4 When requested, the independent auditor/s will also undertake ad-hoc visits at the Approved Laboratories (e.g., to verify that corrective actions have been taken, spot check visits etc.).
 - 2.1.5 Following an audit, the appointed independent auditor/s will undertake an assessment of any corrective evidence provided by the Approved Laboratories to address any non-conformity reported during the audit.
 - 2.1.6 Following the audit (2.1.1) and the corrective evidence assessment (2.1.4 and 2.1.5), the appointed independent auditor/s will provide to REAL recommendations on whether the laboratory's approved status should be renewed, whether it should not be renewed, or if it should be subject to specific conditions.
- 2.2 Competence requirements

REAL will appoint an individual or several individuals (from the same organisation or from different organisations) who collectively have expertise and/or knowledge of the following:

1. Laboratories analytical procedures and methods for testing composts/digestate or other environmental matrices (soil, manures, slurries and/or waters)
2. Laboratories quality control procedures
3. ISO/IEC 17025 General requirements for the competence of testing and calibration laboratories and other relevant standards for testing and calibration services
4. Horticulture, if possible, with background knowledge on the plant response test required in PAS 100
5. Compost stability tests (e.g., ORG0020)
6. Batch biogas tests (e.g., Biochemical methane potential and RBP)

3. THE TENDER SUBMISSION – INFORMATION REQUIRED

- 3.1 Your tender should be submitted by email and should be limited to no more than 10 x A4 sides at minimum 10pt font (excluding appendices).
- 3.2 Your tender must include the following information in the order indicated:
 - (1) **An executive summary** of no more than one side of A4 in length, outlining the proposed work and including the total cost of the proposed work, inclusive of Value Added Tax (“VAT”) and anticipated expenses.

(2) **Company/Organisation details.** REAL will need the following information:

- The name of the company submitting the tender;
- The registered office name, address, VAT number (if applicable) and company or charity registration number;
- The name of the nominated contact person within the tenderer's organisation;
- Contact details including address, telephone number, and e-mail address.

REAL will accept tenders both from individual companies and from consortia. Should you decide to tender as part of a consortium you will need to identify one member of the consortium (the "Lead Contractor") to act as the contracting party. All other consortium members will be sub-contractors to the Lead Contractor.

(3) A description of your working methods

You will need to make clear how you intend to deliver the work and provide estimated timescales for delivery.

(4) A description of the project team who will manage and deliver the work.

This should include a list of individuals, their respective roles within the organisation and, for the purposes of this work their relevant skills and experience including any relevant professional qualifications.

(5) An identification of any sub-contractors to be used.

You should include a list of any sub-contractors you intend to use to fulfil the requirements of the work.

(6) Evidence of a track record in undertaking work similar to that described in this document.

(7) The actual day rate for each individual that will carry out this work and the average daily rate (exclusive of VAT).

You will charge REAL the actual time you spend to independently assess each Approved Laboratory. This may vary depending on whether the Approved Laboratory sub-contracts any other laboratory for some of the tests, as well as on whether the Laboratory is already accredited by UKAS to carry out some of the relevant test methods.

(8) Expenses should be identified separately but must be included as part of the total cost of the work per laboratory. You will also need to identify:

- Any lease or hire costs associated with the delivery of the work to be clearly identified and costed and justification provided to demonstrate the necessity of each item.
- Any capital expenditure associated with the delivery of the work to be clearly identified and costed and justification provided to demonstrate the necessity of each item.

(9) The cost of any additional ad-hoc visits (inclusive of VAT) - see task 2.1.2. These visits will only be performed on REAL's request and will vary in time depending on the focus of the visit.

(10) Identification of any conflicts of interest which might arise if you were selected to undertake the work and if such a conflict were to arise, an indication of how this conflict would be addressed. Where you tender as part of a consortium, all members of the consortium should be considered.

(11) **A copy of your Environmental Policy** and evidence of any accredited Environmental Management System.

(12) **Written confirmation** that you have the necessary permits, licences or exemptions required for the services.

(13) **As appendices**, tenders should include:

- Audited or management accounts for the last 2 financial years; REAL reserves the right to reject bids from Contractors where the accounts show that the Contractor might be at risk of insolvency.
- A statement of any material litigation, pending or threatened, or other legal proceedings; REAL reserves the right to reject bids from Contractors subject to legal proceedings where in REAL's reasonable opinion such proceedings could impact upon the Contractor's ability to deliver the services required.
- Evidence of the level of professional indemnity, public liability and property damage insurance cover held. REAL will require minimum cover levels of:
 - £1 million professional indemnity;
 - £2 million public liability;
 - £2 million property damage.

To be considered for evaluation, Contractors must have this cover in place at the time of bidding or must include (as part of the tender submission) a commitment to take out such cover in the event of being appointed.

3.3 Should you have any questions in relation to the type of information required by REAL, please contact the person identified in Section 5 of this Tender Invitation Document to discuss.

3.4 All tender submissions will be treated on a confidential basis by REAL and its advisers, subject to the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

4. **EVALUATION CRITERIA**

4.1 REAL must be satisfied that each potential contractor has the appropriate capabilities and resources available to undertake the work to REAL's requirements and provide the necessary services.

4.2 The process REAL will use to select its contractors is a competitive one. Your tender submission should be written to address the key requirements and scope of the work and demonstrate how it meets the evaluation criteria below:

Evaluation Criteria	Weighting
Cost of work per laboratory	15%
Consistency of proposal with services or requirements and deliverables	30%

Authority of allocated personnel, their skills and technical capability	35%
Corporate environmental commitment – submission of credible environmental policy and/or environmental management system details	5%
Relevant past experience	15%

5. APPLICATION PROCEDURE

You should send one electronic copy (via email) of your tender submission to:

Emma Laws, Renewable Energy Assurance Limited
 Email: emma@realschemes.org.uk

Emails containing Tender submissions should clearly state the following in the subject field: 'Provision of independent assessment services to check REAL CCS and BCS Approved Laboratories' performances'.

If you wish to ask any questions relating to this tender, please contact Emma in writing only*.

* All questions submitted to REAL will be uploaded as a Q&A to the CCS/BCS websites, one week prior to the deadline for tender submissions.

6. TENDER PROCESS AND TIMETABLE

- 6.1 All tender submissions must remain valid for a minimum period of 90 days following the deadline for receipt of tender submissions.
- 6.2 All tender submissions will be competitively assessed against the evaluation criteria, (stated in Section 4 of this document).
- 6.3 The target timetable for this process is as follows:

Tender Timetable

Deadline for receipt of tender submissions: **Wednesday 14th June 2023**

Deadline for questions in relation to this tender: **Monday 29th May 2023**

REAL may invite the tenderer to present their proposal during w/c Monday 24th July and w/c Monday 31st July 2023 at REAL offices (London)

Tenderers receive written notification of REAL's decision: **Friday 18th August**

REAL reserve the right to change the timetable.

- 6.4 All tenderers will receive written notification of REAL's decision and tenderers will be given the opportunity to discuss feedback on their tender submission.
- 6.5 This information is offered in good faith for the guidance of interested parties, but no warranty or representation is given as to the accuracy or completeness of any of it. REAL and its advisers

shall not be liable for any error, misstatement, or omission. No aspect of this procedure shall constitute a contract or part of a contract. Tenderers participate in the process on the strict understanding that the procedure may be altered or that REAL may not proceed for any reason. REAL reserves the right not to follow up this Tender Invitation Document in any way and in particular not to enter into any contractual arrangement with any of the tenderers. REAL does not bind itself to enter into negotiations or proceed with or accept any tender. Any decision to tender is at the sole discretion of the tenderer and REAL excludes all liability in respect of any tendering costs incurred.

- 6.6 Any contract entered into as a result of this tender process shall be in accordance with REAL's terms and conditions of contract.
- 6.7 Tenderers taking part in this process acknowledge and accept that REAL may publish details about the winning bid (such as the contract value and the name of the winning bidder) on the CCS and BCS websites.