

DPS Schedule 1 (Specification)

Introduction

This specification sets out what Crown Commercial Service (CCS) and our Buyers need.

It forms part of the Dynamic Purchasing System (DPS) terms and conditions and is deliberately broad in its approach. This enables Buyers the flexibility to specify their individual requirements at the Order Contract stage.

Please note the requirements and standards set out in this specification are not exhaustive. Any specific or specialist requirements needed by the Buyer will be detailed at the Order Contract stage.

The Supplier must only provide the Deliverables for the Filter Categories that they have been appointed to.

For all Filter Categories and/or Deliverables, the Supplier must help the Buyer comply with any specific applicable Standards of the Buyer.

The Deliverables and any Standards set out below may be refined (to the extent permitted and set out in the Order Form) by a Buyer during an Order Procedure to reflect its Deliverables required for entering a particular Order Contract.

Our priorities for this DPS

Building on our success in supporting Buyers in the administration of grant schemes, we have now expanded our scope to include support for all other types of Funds. The Government and the Wider Public Sector distribute millions of pounds each year to citizens, businesses and organisations via grants, loans, entitlement benefits and other types of funds that may not be so easily described. Now, any funding scheme or programme can be delivered via RM6322 Fund Administration & Disbursement Services. This was our priority, to create a service for all Fund types and create further opportunity for our Buyers and Suppliers.

Specification

Mandatory Requirements (Schedule 1 Part A Services)

1. Our Priorities

- 1.1. CCS priorities are to support the whole life costs of Fund Administration & Disbursement Services and to influence efficiencies through offering valued solutions to meet the individual requirements of the Buyer. This includes building and increasing the capacity of high quality services, providing greater opportunities for aggregation and developing a dynamic commercial model for access to services.

1.2. Scope

- 1.2.1.** The Supplier shall provide Services to the Buyer for the administration and disbursement of Funds via schemes and programmes the Buyer will seek to deliver. These schemes may be for Funds such as (but not be limited to) Grant, Loan, Entitlement Benefits and other Funds not so easily categorised or described. These may well be hybrid schemes that incorporate more than one Fund type, or indeed may be schemes that are being run either solely or in partnership between Buyer organisations.
- 1.2.2.** Schemes may be available to citizens, businesses and/or any applicable organisation as so identified by the Buyer as part of their Deliverables.
- 1.2.3.** Buyers will be Central Government Departments and all other UK Public Sector Bodies including (but not limited to) Local Authorities, Health, Police, Fire and Rescue, Education and Devolved Administrations.
- 1.2.4.** The core requirement shall include these four (4) Category Filters:
 - a. Sector
 - b. Services
 - c. Fund type
 - d. Location

2. Key Service Requirements

- 2.1.** These key Services have been developed in line with Government policy and are applicable across all of the Fund types identified in 1.2.1.
- 2.2.** If the scheme in question is specifically a grant scheme, we have incorporated the six stages of the grants life cycle for general grants and shall comply with the Government Functional Standards GovS 015: Grants. This includes the minimum requirements for the design and administration of government general grants. The Services also incorporate the Government Functional Standard GovS 013: Counter Fraud. Services must be fully compliant with the functional standards and supporting minimum requirements.
- 2.3.** The Supplier shall offer either one or a combination of the six key Services that are listed below:
 - a. Design & Development (see 2.3.1)
 - b. Market Engagement and Promotion (see 2.3.2)
 - c. Application & Award Services (see 2.3.3)
 - d. Evaluation Services (see 2.3.4)
 - e. Counter Fraud Services (see 2.3.5)
 - f. Full Programme Management (see 2.3.6)

2.3.1. Design & Development

This includes:

Design and Development of Programme Policy and Guidance - The Supplier shall comply with all aspects described in point (A) below;

Assessment and / or Award - The Supplier shall comply with all aspects described in point (B) below;

Monitoring and Reporting - The Supplier shall comply with all aspects described in point (c) below;

Signposting and Triage to Sources of Support - The Supplier shall comply with all aspects described in point (d) below;

Technical 'Direct' Support - The Supplier shall comply with all aspects described in point (e) below.

A. Design and development of programme policy and guidance

The Supplier shall work closely with Buyers to support the aims and outcomes to be achieved, including but not limited to:

- a. The development of specific guidance and policy around high- level programme aims and objectives;
- b. The recommendation of appropriate programme design elements; e.g. design and delivery models, communications and marketing routes, demand management and assessment methodologies including assessment criteria and scoring systems;
- c. The research and development of mechanisms and prevention measures to deal with the management of high impact risks including fraud, misuse of funds and reputational risk;
- d. Development of a suite of tools and documents to measure and articulate the success of a scheme or programme, including appropriate methodologies to measure, track and evaluate performance.
- e. Work closely with Buyers to support the completion of the Equalities Impact Assessment to fulfil the Secretary of State's duty under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010.

The exact requirement for design and development of programme policy and guidance will be dependent on the type and style of the particular scheme or programme therefore, exact detail of the type of service required as outlined above will be agreed in the Order Contract.

B. Development of assessment and / or award process

The Supplier shall work closely with Buyers on fund assessment and / or award, including through but not limited to:

- a. Supporting the Buyer in developing fund guidelines, as well as designing application forms and processes;
- b. Supporting the Buyer develop the selection process;
- c. Helping Buyers to take effective decisions regarding which applications to support by making strategic recommendations regarding the wider programme objectives;
- d. Providing clear presentations of advice that offers support and recommendations to decision makers when making effective decisions.

C. Design of monitoring and reporting regimes

The Supplier shall put in place key monitoring regimes to track progress towards scheme and programme objectives and inform decisions on intervention, including but not limited to:

- a. Monitoring progress of activities towards agreed milestones for individual projects and wider programmes;

- b. Monitoring progress towards objectives of individual schemes and wider programmes;
- c. Monitoring the appropriate disbursement and subsequent use of funding;
- d. Collecting and reporting on scheme performance, using quantitative and qualitative information, including feedback from Buyers, participants and fund beneficiaries.

The Supplier shall help manage relationships on behalf of the Buyer by deciding the appropriate level of engagement with participants and/or programme beneficiaries on behalf of Buyers.

The Supplier shall work closely with Buyers in a proactive and constructive manner to deal with issues that arise ensuring that the Authority is kept informed of any issues identified on the risk register, and bringing their expertise and advice to ensure best possible results for the programme, in a transparent and accountable manner.

D. Signposting and triage to sources of support both pre and post application

The Supplier shall work closely with Buyers to proactively anticipate challenges for participants that could affect the achievement of desired outcomes, including challenges such as but not limited to:

- a. Those that could have a direct effect on the achievement of desired outcomes; e.g. risks associated with business continuity;
- b. Those associated with a change in the wider operating environment that could affect the achievement of desired outcomes;
- c. Provide support to participants by signposting existing sources of information, guidance and advice (such as funding), including free and paid-for sources;
- d. Facilitate and provide support to peer networks of participants to work in partnership with others, share knowledge and lessons learned.

Such requirements will be specified by Buyers in the Order Contract.

E. Technical 'direct' support

The Supplier and / or any Subcontractor(s) they engage shall work closely with Buyers to design and deliver packages of direct support to achieve the stated scheme or programme aims. Such requirements may be at both pre-application and post-award stages and must be targeted to ensure the best possible outcomes from the scheme or programme. They must include, but not be limited to, activities such as:

- a. Providing expert consultancy support for specific elements of project delivery, including development or refinement of IT systems to support scheme management;
- b. Bringing together applicants or programme participants developing or delivering similar projects;
- c. Providing targeted training and support to applicants or programme participants.
- d. Procure or directly deliver the packages of direct support to potential applicants, applicants and participants, ensuring that they successfully deliver to delivery agreed milestones.

The exact requirement will be dependent on the type and style of the particular scheme or programme, therefore, exact detail of the type of service required as outlined above will be agreed in the Order Contract.

2.3.2. Market Engagement & Promotion

This includes:

Communications and Marketing – The Supplier shall comply with all aspects described in point (A) below;

Production and Design of Supporting Materials - The Supplier shall comply with all aspects described in point (B) below;

Design and Development of Templates - The Supplier shall comply with all aspects described in point (C) below.

A. Communications and marketing

The Supplier shall work closely with Buyers to:

- a. Identify and target relevant audiences and potential applicants;
- b. Promote the scheme or programme to relevant audiences and potential applicants and;
- c. Provide impartial help for applicants through the application process by creating and delivering clear messages through a range of mediums e.g. personal engagement and/or interaction.

The Supplier shall work closely with Buyers to create opportunities to bring together applicants and potential applicants to achieve the development of high quality proposals. Specifically, suppliers will be required to run events where potential applicants and applicants can increase their knowledge;

The Supplier shall work closely with Buyers to identify, target and interact at the right level with audiences to promote the ongoing activities and achievements of the scheme or programme as a whole. The Supplier shall establish key messages in agreement with Buyers in order to promote the scheme or programme successfully; identify the appropriate style of communication to potential applicants and applicants, e.g. newsletters or social media posts; and publicise the success and achievements of the applicant(s).

The nature of the required communication and marketing is dependent on the type and style of the particular scheme or programme therefore, exact details of the type of service required will be agreed with the Buyer in the Order Contract.

B. Production and design of supporting intelligent guidance and materials

The Supplier shall design and produce guidance for fund applicants and participants. This must include, but not be limited to:

- a. Appropriate pre-application guidance, clearly communicating scheme or programme aims, objectives and criteria, to ensure that relevant audiences and potential applicants are easily able to make accurate decisions around the suitability of a scheme or programme for their organisation and project;
- b. Appropriate application guidance, which supports applicants to provide all required information through the application process;

- c. Distribution of relevant specific guidance if required for a particular scheme or programme; e.g. state aid, security, financial requirements and FAQs;
- d. Guidance that motivates and supports participants to implement best practice in the management and delivery of the activities that are funded.

C. Design of templates for audience usability

The Supplier shall work closely with Buyers to develop easy to use and easily accessible digital and paper application forms that are appropriately styled with any accompanying materials where appropriate.

These forms will include, but not be limited to, application, award and monitoring for applicants and participants. Suppliers may be required to hold and maintain documentation and information (including digital information) on behalf of Buyers. This will be agreed in the Order Contract.

The Supplier shall work closely with Buyers to develop materials to support and guide staff and decision makers in executing assessments, awards, monitoring and evaluation of schemes and programmes. The style and language used for any material will be agreed between the Buyer and Supplier in the Order Contract.

The Supplier shall work closely with Buyers to decide upon the most suitable platform for accessibility.

The exact requirement will be dependent on the type and style of the particular scheme or programme therefore, exact detail of the type of service required as outlined above will be agreed in the Order Contract.

2.3.3. Application & Award Services

This includes:

Customer and Administrative Support – The Supplier shall comply with all aspects described in point (A) below;

Fund Assessment and Award – The Supplier shall comply with all aspects described in point (B) below;

Payment Processing – The Supplier shall comply with all aspects described in point (C) below;

Performance Monitoring – The Supplier shall comply with all aspects described in point (D) below.

A. Customer and administrative support

The Supplier shall provide Buyers with customer service and administrative support services that facilitate the delivery of fund administration through, but not limited to, the following activities:

Customer service

A function that will provide assistance, advice and guidance to applicants and potential applicants participating, or seeking to participate in a scheme or programme commissioned by the Buyer. The scope of the support will include but not be limited to:

- a. The provision of an enquiry service proportionate to the scheme or programme, which furnishes prompt and professional advice concerning all aspects of the scheme or programme;
- b. The production and dissemination of visible and clear guidance concerning the application and payment processes associated with scheme or programme initiatives, including the prompt provision of accurate information in response to queries submitted by applicants;
- c. The delivery of a high quality customer service experience that facilitates the movement of customers through the process;
- d. The timely resolution of complaints received as a consequence of the Supplier's delivery of the scheme or programme and a mechanism for providing Buyers with full transparency of any complaints received and their status (in terms of resolution). Supplier to seek a Buyer's guidance on the definition of 'timely' as part of the process of resolving a complaint during the term of the relevant Order Contract.

Record management

The supplier shall be responsible for the receipt, processing, filing/retrieval, management, and retention/disposal of all records and information associated with their administration of a scheme or programme on behalf of Buyers. Administrative services will support the easy identification and retrieval of individual records or files for publication or audit, enabling Buyers to be transparent and accountable. The services must have the following characteristics:

- a. The ability to accommodate Buyers policies for the management, retention, backup and disposal of records and files.
- b. Technological adaptability in order to successfully interface with Buyers existing technological infrastructure.
- c. Provide for security of information requiring special protection.
- d. Compliance with the Data Protection Act / GDPR.
- e. Training of Buyer personnel and creation of user guides to facilitate access to archived data.
- f. Comprehensive auditable records of the performance of a scheme and programme on an on-going basis including but not limited to, number of applicants and number of proposals.

The Supplier will be responsible for compiling and providing Buyers with regular status reports concerning the projects being run.

Administrative services

The Supplier shall provide administrative services which will include but not be limited to:

- a. Risk management. The Supplier will be responsible for implementing systems and processes to effectively manage risks and issues relevant to predict:
 - i. Demand (number of applications);
 - ii. Achievements and outcome risks and issues to an appropriate degree;

- iii. Fraud and Counter Fraud;
 - iv. Reputational;
- b. Identify and facilitate opportunities for potential applicants, applicants and participants to work together (peer to peer support) and manage the administration and logistics of peer to peer support for funded projects. This includes:
- i. Arranging venues for meetings;
 - ii. Sending out invitations to potential applicants, applicants and participants and collating responses;
 - iii. Small value purchases in support of peer to peer meetings e.g. stationery / refreshments;
 - iv. Travel booking services e.g. taxi bookings.

B. Scheme and programme assessment and / or award

The Supplier shall work closely with Buyers to make decisions in respect of fund assessment and / or award, including but not limited to:

- a. Reading and evaluation of applications;
- b. Managing the receipt and assessment of all applications in a scheme or programme, including producing assessment summaries, scoring based on predefined criteria and making recommendations for Buyers decisions;
- c. Supporting effective decision making by assessing and presenting the extent to which individual applications demonstrate that the proposals meet the scheme or programme's defined assessment criteria;
- d. Seeking (where required) clarification from applicants concerning their applications;
- e. Performing due diligence checks;
- f. Recommendation of successful applicants;
- g. Securing approvals for award;
- h. Communicating the results (successful and unsuccessful notifications) to applicants via debriefing sessions as agreed with the Buyer; Secure signatures on the Funding Agreement as required by the Buyer;
- i. Maintaining data on the number and profile of applications including their outcomes;

For grant programmes, provide the Buyer with the necessary information for inclusion on the Government Grants Information Service (GGIS).

The nature of the required scheme or programme assessment is dependent on the type and style of the particular scheme or programme therefore, exact detail of the type of service required as outlined above will be agreed in the Order Contract.

C. Payment processing

Blocks of funding may be transferred to the Supplier, and it will be their responsibility to use the funding to disburse to participants and fund recipients in a timely and accurate manner as defined by the Buyer at time of the Order Contract. Required payments can be either pre-planned or reactive.

Unless agreed in writing by the Buyer or prohibited by the Law, where the Supplier is providing a Service that includes the subcontracting of all or part of the Service for the purposes of receiving payments from, or making payments to recipients, and / or making payments to suppliers, the Supplier shall utilise CCS Commercial Agreements for the selection and supply of those subcontracted services.

The Supplier shall ensure competent management of funds held in accordance with the requirements specified by Buyers at Order Procedure.

If required and in agreement with the Buyer, the Supplier shall suggest processes to perform checks to ensure that the recipient of funds is financially stable and is sufficiently competent to hold and manage the funds provided to them.

The Supplier shall provide financial controls to mitigate fraud risk.

For pre-planned payments, the Supplier shall release the funds to the participant for the amount as instructed by the Buyer.

For reactive payments, the Supplier shall confirm that predetermined criteria have been met in order to assess if the payment can be made. Authorisation will be required from the Buyer before release of the payment.

The Supplier shall ensure funds are released in line with agreed monitoring and payment processes specified by the Buyer.

Buyers shall provide the Supplier with a list of generic funds to be paid to participants on a date specified in the Order Contract.

The Supplier shall provide Buyers with a full record of the payments transacted against any scheme or programme, within 24 hours of the receipt of a request.

The Supplier shall, if required by Buyers, liaise with suppliers that are monitoring the performance of recipients of funds and manage any payment suspension to those recipients if so required by the Buyer.

The Supplier shall, if required by Buyers, obtain and maintain client insurance to the level specified by the Buyer.

The nature of the required fund payment processing is dependent on the type and style of the particular scheme or programme, therefore, the exact detail of the type of service required as outlined above will be agreed in the Order Contract.

D. Performance and financial monitoring

The Supplier shall work closely with Buyers to support the monitoring of performance and the use of fund finances, including but not limited to:

- a. Setting up monitoring and evaluation processes including those related to risk and fraud management;
- b. For grant schemes, provide the Buyer with the necessary information for inclusion on the Government Grants Information Service (GGIS);
- c. Conducting regular reviews to identify risk (including counter fraud) and record outcomes and assess delivery of value for money;

- d. Taking action to resolve issues as agreed with the Buyer;
- e. Supporting the Buyer in carrying out any other tasks that relate to performance and financial monitoring.
- f. Reporting any perceived fraudulent behaviour by recipients.

If required by the Buyer and relevant to the type of funding being disbursed, setting up mechanisms for recouping funding if sent fraudulently, in error or through other means which requires the recipient to return some or all of the money paid to them

The exact requirement will be dependent on the type and style of the particular scheme or programme therefore, exact detail of the type of service required as outlined above will be agreed in the Order Contract.

2.3.4. Evaluation Services

This section details the Services that are available under Evaluation Services to provide:

Evaluation of Outcomes and Delivery - The Supplier shall comply with all aspects described in point (A) below;

A. Evaluation of outcomes and delivery

The Supplier shall work closely with Buyers to:

- a. Design and deliver comprehensive and robust evaluation of a scheme or programme, its outcomes and impact;
- b. Measure and report on the outcomes and impact of scheme or programme spend; including promoting and incorporating lessons learned from the measuring and reporting activity into future work. For example, qualitative research, (in-depth interviews, focus groups, online discussion communities, workshops); qualitative methods, (online, telephone, face to face surveys, randomised control trial (RCT), longitudinal evaluation, media analysis (including social media);
- c. Report on lessons learnt and good practice;
- d. Where understanding the existing evidence base is the principal focus of work e.g. literature reviews, rapid evidence assessments, scoping/mapping exercises, discourse analysis, stakeholder or 'expert' interviews, analysis of existing datasets etc. the Supplier shall work closely with Buyers to provide secondary research evidence.

The Supplier shall work closely with Buyers to deliver strategic planning and development; such as to inform policy design and formulation and/or future strategy. For example:

- a. Qualitative research;
- b. Deliberative engagement;
- c. Collaborative engagement / co-creation and other qualitative approaches;
- d. Telephone / online / face to face surveys to quantify attitudes and behaviours relevant to policy development;
- e. Observational and behavioural approaches – ethnography

The Supplier shall work closely with Buyers to deliver research support services; e.g. interviewing, recruiting, data processing, statistical analysis, data linking, data manipulation, statistical modelling, social media analysis and re-analysis.

Using the above, the Supplier will provide the Buyer with sufficient evaluation data to allow the Buyer to measure the success of the scheme against its Deliverables. These will vary from scheme to scheme and must be set out by the Buyer.

The exact requirement will be dependent on the type and style of the particular scheme or programme therefore, exact detail of the type of service required as outlined above will be agreed in the Order Contract.

2.3.5. Counter Fraud Services

This section details the Services that are available under Counter Fraud Services to provide:

The Supplier shall comply with all aspects described in point (A) below.

A. Fraud detection and prevention

The Supplier shall work closely with the Buyer to:

Develop systems and processes to prevent fraud occurring whilst a scheme or programme is live;

- a. Develop Post Event Assurance Plans designed to identify and recover funds subject to fraud or error;
- b. Review schemes and programmes, in line with the fraud risk assessment and the terms of the fund agreement, to ascertain if fraud has happened or is happening;
- c. Investigate any alleged or confirmed fraud in line with the Buyers Counter Fraud teams instructions;
- d. Report findings back to the Buyer;
- e. Make recommendations to mitigate any future fraud risk

The exact requirement will be dependent on the type and style of the particular scheme or programme therefore, exact detail of the type of service required as outlined above will be agreed in the Order Contract.

2.3.6. Full Programme Management

Full Programme Management shall be used by Buyers as follows:

A. Buyers will only use full programme management if they require a combination of Services listed under 2.3.1 to 2.3.5 (inclusive); or

B. To provide Service consisted of any combination of the Services listed under at least two of 2.3.1 to 2.3.5.

C. Full programme management cannot be used to procure Services available solely under 2.3.1 to 2.3.5.

3. Social Value

- 3.1.** Suppliers will be expected to embed social value into all Order Contracts, in line with the Social Value Act 2012, the requirements of Buyers and any subsequent government initiatives to enable the effective implementation of social value.
- 3.2.** As a condition of onboarding this DPS Contract, CCS requires Suppliers to demonstrate they are committed to report on the impact of social value throughout the lifetime of the agreement, every 12 months from their DPS Start Date.
- 3.3.** Suppliers must provide evidence of their commitment to social value and demonstrate an ability and willingness to work with Buyers to identify and help further their social value requirements in all Order Contracts. To satisfy this requirement, Suppliers must agree to provide or deliver reasonable and proportionate social value benefits within all Order Contracts. Suppliers should consider the following policy themes, as a minimum:
 - a. COVID-19 recovery;
 - b. Tackling economic inequality;
 - c. Fighting climate change;
 - d. Equal opportunity; and
 - e. Wellbeing
- 3.4.** Suppliers are expected to act with these priorities in mind, and CCS may discuss these priorities as part of DPS Management meetings.
- 3.5.** The Buyer's requirements will be set out in the Order Contract Specification Of Requirement. The Supplier shall comply with and/or identify proposed social value initiatives, proportionate and relevant to each Order Contract.
- 3.6.** The Supplier shall deliver measurable benefits and impacts in respect of the social value priorities, when identified in the Order Contract.
- 3.7.** The Supplier shall record and report performance against the social value requirements, when detailed in the Order Contract. This may include self-serve reports delivering metrics and outcomes.

4. Sustainability

- 4.1.** The Supplier shall ensure that it adheres to Government guidance and best practice as set out in the Greening Government Commitments.
- 4.2.** The Supplier shall, when applicable, provide an annual Carbon Reduction Plan in line with [Procurement Policy Note 06/21](#) confirming the supplier's commitment to achieving Net Zero by 2050 in the UK, and setting out the environmental management measures that they have in place and which will be in effect and utilised during the performance of the contract
- 4.3.** If required by the Buyer, the Supplier shall provide support to a number of strategic priorities related to the environment within wider government policy, which include, but are not limited to:
 - a. Sustainable development
 - b. Carbon Net Zero

c. Energy Efficiency Directive (EED) Standards

- 4.4.** The Supplier shall support CCS and the Buyer to meet the Government agenda in terms of business sustainability. This requires consideration of commercial needs and the ability to make a positive impact on society and the environment, both locally and globally, as detailed in Joint Schedule 5 (Corporate Social Responsibility).
- 4.5.** If required by the Buyer, the Supplier shall provide information on new or improved environmentally preferable products when they become commercially available and, promote their use under the DPS.
- 4.6.** The Supplier shall work with the Authority and Buyers to identify opportunities to introduce innovation, reduce cost and waste and ensure sustainable development is at the heart of their operations.

5. Regional, National and International Standards

- 5.1.** The Supplier shall ensure that services delivered within a devolved administration region (Wales, Scotland or Northern Ireland) conform to their applicable standards and decarbonisation targets.
- 5.2.** The Supplier shall ensure that applicable products and services support the adoption of measures set out in relevant government, guidance and standards including, but not limited to, the following:
 - a. Common Minimum Standards (CMS)
 - b. Government Buying Standards
 - c. Supplier Code of Conduct
 - d. Greening Government Commitments
 - e. Applicable regulations
- 5.3.** If required by the Buyer, the Supplier shall ensure that Services delivered within international locations conform to that country's relevant legislation.

ANNEX A – Glossary

Term	Definition
Fund, fund, funds	A grant, loan, voucher, entitlement benefit or any other payment awarded (that cannot be so easily classified as part of a scheme or programme administered to citizens , businesses or organisations)
Funding Agreement	The standard funding agreement that should be signed by successful applicants where applicable
Government Functional Standards GovS 015: Grants.	The Standard that all grant making bodies adhere to when developing grant schemes and programmes
Government Functional Standard GovS 013: Counter Fraud	The Standard that sets the expectations for the management of fraud, bribery and corruption risk in government organisations
Government Grants Information Service (GGIS)	The portal that captures all information on grant awards across all departments