



Great South West Public Affairs Programme

REQUEST FOR QUOTATION: Pan Regional Partnership Public Affairs Support

Date: 8th January 2024

Date services required: 1/3/24 – 31/03/25

Key Focus of RFQ

A 12-month opportunity for a retained public affairs agency, to be reviewed after year one. The first year will run from March 2024 to March 2025 (inclusive).

Build high-profile, high-quality, impactful and measurable campaigns that positions the Great South West at an international and national level.

Establish strategic relationships and partnerships with key target groups and audiences and mobilise political, business and stakeholder support behind the Great South West region as a credible player in the UK economy

About The Great South West

The Great South West is a business-led organisation covering Cornwall, Devon, Dorset, and Somerset focused on driving investment into the region and promoting the world class potential of the industries, technologies, businesses, and workforce located in the south west of England. We do this by convening the collective voice of business, local councils, Universities, and other stakeholders through the leadership of our Partnership Board, which works with Government and investors to champion our incredible region on a national and international level.

The Great South West economy is worth £64.4 billion and represents a population of over 3½ million, some 190,000 businesses - almost double the size of Greater Manchester or West Midlands. We have major strengths and expertise in marine industries, photonics, environmental science, nuclear, aerospace (fixed-wing and rotary), advanced engineering, digital innovation, agritech, and food and drink production.

The region is vital to the UK's economic security. We are home to the largest infrastructure project in Europe at Hinkley Point driving unrivalled supply chain opportunities for manufacturing SMEs, Europe's first horizontal launch spaceport in Cornwall creating a pioneering satellite and technology cluster across the peninsula, the UK's first gigafactory hub at Bridgwater through the Gravity development which



will be critical to our energy transition and future economy, market-leading opportunities in Cornwall such as floating off-shore wind in the Celtic Sea and critical minerals including lithium, the largest naval base in Western Europe in Plymouth which is adjacent to a new Freeport driving investment into our world leading marine industries and nationally critical defence assets in Dorset which are playing a leading role in next generation AUKUS and NATO programmes creating high quality engineering jobs and innovation across sectors.

Our business environment attracts inward investors from across the world, largely because of our industry-leading companies, great research capacity and a network of innovative supply chain companies. We have world-class natural capital - almost 700 miles of coastline, two national parks, and dozens of designated areas - attracting more visitors than anywhere outside London. Our pan-regional partnership has an exciting and ambitious agenda to deliver up to £45bn of economic benefit and become the leading region nationally and globally for the green and blue economy by 2035.

Tender Opportunity:

The Great South West (GSW) is looking to procure a suitably qualified provider to deliver high quality and impactful public affairs services for the partnership and elevate the visibility, influence and leadership which we believe the region can play across the UK economy. It has many assets which are critical to the future success and security of the UK – many will be familiar with some of these, but we believe there is much more untapped potential that the Great South West can do nationally and internationally.

We are focused on increasing engagement and visible impact in 2024 with Government Ministers, the Shadow Front Bench, parliamentarians, senior executives across trade and industry organisations, regulatory and sector bodies and international trade advisers working with foreign embassies and consulates to forge new strategic relationships and discuss the potential of the GSW region playing a leading role to drive growth in the UK economy.

The key priorities and focus for this tender include:

- Senior Ministers and their Special Advisers across Government with a particular focus on building relationships and visibility in key departments which are critical to the maximising the opportunities which are located within the Great South West region including No 10, HM Treasury, DBT, DLUCH, MoD, DENZ, DSIT, DEFRA, DFT, DFE and Cabinet Office
- Shadow Cabinet Members and Advisers in order to build and maintain strong relationships with Opposition Teams, their development of policies for the party manifesto and understanding of the potential of the Great South West, particularly during what is expected to be an election year in 2024
- Senior officials across Government in elevating the knowledge, understanding and visibility of the Great South West as a strategic partner to collaborate with,



shape and inform the policy landscape for Ministers and their departments including the preparation of briefings for new incoming Ministerial Teams following the General Election

- The Great South West All-Party Parliamentary Group consisting of regional MPs and members of the House of Lords to build knowledge and expertise in key strategic priorities in order to lobby, campaign and advocate for the region within Parliament and externally
- Regulatory, sector and trade bodies aligned with the strategic opportunities within the Great South West in order to deepen understanding of the region and its role within the UK economy and internationally, increase visibility of assets and businesses and build advocacy for the region as part of their national agenda with Government
- Trade specialists and advisers across specific foreign embassies and consulates which offer market opportunities for growth, investment and export across the Great South West

Deliverables and outputs:

We are seeking a broad range of key outputs from this tender which will advance the Great South West's core priorities. As a minimum, we will be expecting the successful agency to provide:

- a comprehensive Westminster stakeholder and key influencers mapping exercise, covering all areas of interest for the Great South West and a list of public affairs objectives and plan to achieve these – noting the expectation of a General Election in 2024
- up to four Westminster Events on the parliamentary estate focusing on high value political stakeholders, trade and business targets to showcase the potential and investment opportunities in the Great South West and its critical role in the UK economy, nationally and internationally
- a schedule of meetings for GSW Board and Executive Team members with a number of ministers, shadow front bench members and key political stakeholders across all three parties including follow ups on outcomes from sessions and maintenance of relationship for the Great South West
- the secretariat for the APPG for the Great South West, including liaison with Chair and Vice Chairs, planning of 3-4 meetings across the duration of this tender, securing key speakers and influencers for each session, dissemination of papers, etc.
- strategic advice to the Great South West on the attendance and focus for Party Conferences in 2024



- formal briefings on progress and impacts to Great South West Board and Officer Group and acting as a critical friend to the GSW Executive Team on alignment and opportunities to wider activities across the partnership delivery programme in 2024
- attendance at Great South West Annual Conference in September 2024, with the potential of leading a plenary or breakout session for delegates at the event

We recognise that 2024 will be an extremely busy year with an expected General Election within the next twelve months. Speculation continues on the timing of the election, and this will mean time with Ministers, Advisers, Officials and the Shadow Front Bench will be at a premium. Equally, we know that this is the most crucial of periods for such sessions as political teams focus in on manifesto commitments, policy briefings and shaping their election platforms. It is conceivable that this requires some changes in our approach, which we need to be prepared for.

As such we are looking for flexibility, political insight and expertise in the successful provider to navigate these issues and adapt to any changes in the political landscape over the course of the tender period. We are seeking a partnership approach with co-investment in the programme of activity developed under this tender. It will be essential for the successful agency to work in close collaboration with the GSW Executive Team and its other contractors, such as Marketing and Communications, in achieving outcomes for the region.

Application Process:

Key Requirements

The Great South West is seeking to appoint a suitably qualified supplier which will provide public affairs services and advice to the partnership over the period of this tender.

We would hope to attract responses from agencies who clearly demonstrate the following characteristics:

- extensive experience of working with the highest levels of Government, Ministers and advisers, parliamentarians and central government departments underpinned by a network of relationships and contacts which can be deployed behind this commission
- demonstrable knowledge and understanding of navigating the Westminster machine and landscape, and delivering highly credible and impactful campaigns at a national level for place-based clients
- significant reach into international and national influencers across trade, investment and regulatory bodies which are critical to increasing the visibility and positioning of the Great South West



- deep knowledge and experience of executing trade and investment opportunities and campaign and working with foreign embassies and consulates
- strong experience of B2B communications
- strong understanding of the Great South West region, its assets and the opportunities for it to play a leading role in the UK economy both nationally and internationally

Tenderers must carefully examine and consider the brief and satisfy themselves of the appropriateness and validity of any information provided.

If you were to work with us on this project, you must be able to agree to Cornwall Council's standard terms and conditions.

If you are interested in this commission, please submit a proposal outlining how you would meet this specification and its key requirements including information on:

- how you would approach the above specification and deliver the key outputs set out in the RFQ
- examples of comparable work you have delivered (for illustrative purposes only and can be existing/previous campaigns you've worked on)
- your credentials, skills, experience and the team which would be involved to undertake the work
- the distinctive methods of communication you will use to reach target audiences
- a full budget breakdown including allocated days / hours and rates across the team

Budget

The maximum budget available for this activity is £45,000 plus VAT; this will be for an initially to March 2025 with the potential to extend for a further period. We would like tenderers to outline the most competitive price to deliver the above deliverables.

Evaluation of bids

All submitted proposals and the interview process for shortlisted agencies will be scored against a pre-determined criterion set out below.

The evaluation criteria and weightings are shown below:



<p>Experience:</p> <p>It is our aim to employ an agency that demonstrates clear understanding and alignment against the brief and how the Great South West can successfully position itself with target audiences as a serious and credible player in the UK economy. We would particularly invite you to share past experience and examples with us that relate strongly to the GSW partnership</p>	30%
<p>Proposed Approach:</p> <p>2024 will be a highly demanding year so we want to see a creative and distinct approach in proposals to executing our plans which can navigate the political landscape and deliver an impactful programme for the Great South West which is unique and cuts through across key target groups within this RFQ.</p>	30%
<p>Team Credentials:</p> <p>Working with an agency and matching our team's enthusiasm and positivity is key to ensuring a strong, long-lasting relationship. We would encourage proposals to set out the track record and skills of your chosen team, why they are the best fit for working with GSW and what differentiates them from other potential suppliers</p>	20%
<p>Pricing:</p> <p>Expected time, resource and budget required to achieve the objectives/outcomes. Demonstrating good value for money and outlining an expected return on an investment (though not necessarily financial) will also be considered.</p>	20%

Timeline:

8/1/2024	Publication of RFQ
15/1/2024	3-4pm Supplier briefing – virtual meeting for interested agencies considering submitting a proposal; please register by 12pm on Friday 12th January by email via janet.powell@heartofswlep.co.uk
26/1/2024	Proposal submission deadline
2/2/2024	Interviews with shortlisted agencies and appointment of supplier
1/3/2024	Contract signed with appointed supplier and activities commence

The deadline for all tender submissions is **4pm on Friday 26th January** – please note, any late submissions will not be considered.

Please submit your proposal, with relevant attachments by email to janet.powell@heartofswlep.co.uk

Please state '**Great South West Public Affairs RFQ Submission**' in any email correspondence.

Suggested further reading material:



Detailed below are a number of additional reading materials we suggest you review prior to your submission:

[The Great South West website](#)

[Securing Our Future Prospectus](#)

[Clean Energy Powerhouse Prospectus](#)