



## ***BCO Research Specification***

### **Towards a Zero Carbon Office**

The BCO are pleased to invite your company to submit a proposal for an important new research study described below.

#### **Background**

At its annual conference in New York in May 2007, the British Council for Offices (BCO) declared that it is no longer enough to view energy performance of offices as merely coming up with a series of “green” features or products. Contrary to current green thinking, the BCO believes that the next generation of research projects must focus on people, and their behaviour during the briefing, design and, perhaps most importantly, the actual day-to-day occupation of a new office.

#### **Objectives:**

This research will seek to highlight the substantial gap between a building’s design capabilities to minimize carbon emissions and the ability of occupiers to make the most of them.

To help close this gap, this new research project will aim to promote the notion of extending the role of the designing architects and engineers over the life of a building. This will help occupiers understand how to reduce carbon emissions in the workplace, while providing the designers with vital feedback on how the building is used and operated. A central premise of this new work will stress that technical innovation in the design of buildings is not enough on its own, and that the physical occupation of the building and how it operates is now the biggest obstacle to reducing emissions.

## Methodology

The primary objective of this study is to create a roadmap outlining how the office sector might design and occupy a new brand of low carbon offices.

In examining the adaptations and incorporation of new technologies into office design and occupancy to achieve a zero carbon office potential tenderers should refer to the concept of zero carbon buildings as defined by DCLG and in recent documents from the UK Green Buildings Council (UKGBC). Contractors should take note of various government initiatives on in the low carbon policy arena including the current debate about a code for sustainable non-domestic buildings, EPBD, and local energy networks. Similarly contractors should include in their appraisal and analysis relevant activities by the UKGBC and the BRE.

Applying this definition to functioning and operation of the UK office market the contractor should consider the following:

- The future development and trends in office design, particularly in light of density and planning questions in some parts of the UK,
- The debates which surround the installation of certain low carbon equipment, it's subsequent use & operation, and building occupiers views and ideas,
- The influence of Private Finance Initiatives with their inbuilt low carbon targets,
- The influence of social side of low carbon design and corporate social responsibility,
- The influence of government regulations including Part L and EPBD.

Current low carbon practice should be reviewed alongside its benefits and also its faults and failures. Building on best practice now this study should move forwards to consider future practice in relation to the following topics:

- Embedded energy
- Community Energy
- Design aspects
- Life cycle
- Occupational Intensity
- Environmentally friendly management systems

This is not an exhaustive list and the contractor may wish to add other topics which may then be reviewed by the project steering group. The purpose here would be to

outline the various other options which could be considered to enable the office sector to create a low carbon economy within its particular sector of the economy.

In assessing the future development of a truly low carbon economy it would be important for the contractor to conduct a reality check of both the failures now, but also of the possible new design characteristics and equipment which may be proposed over the medium term.

Much of the above could be analysed through the use of case study material both across the UK and elsewhere in Europe. However as the objective of this study is to consider mechanisms to enable the achievement of a low carbon economy through office development the prospective contractor may adapt this methodology outline in ways which enhance the achievement of this project's overall objective.

### **Report structure and specifications**

The final report should be a text-based report including as necessary a combination of technical detail. The actual presentation of the report should reflect the different topics addressed and a defined chapter structure would be, in our opinion, suitable. All prospective contractors will be presented with samples of BCO research, to offer guidance on format.

The contractors should bear in mind that the final report will be published and therefore the structure of the document should reflect this. A stimulating style and a robust methodology should be a core aspect of any research produced. All research materials are peer reviewed by various committees, key BCO members, and by the Secretariat itself to ensure consistently high standards. Contractors will be expected to co-operate with this process and produce redrafts of their text in response to these reviews. Such a process does benefit all those parties involved in BCO research work and has produced robust and highly reputable research reports over the past six years.

Additionally the contractor will present a single copy, 1,000-word summary of the report in both paper and electronic copy.

- The report should include a 1000 word executive summary and a set of conclusions. (Scope does exist for a flexible application of this particular guidance.)
- The use of page headers and footers should be avoided, as evidenced by samples of current work and the contractor should not include their own name on any such material inside the main text of the report.
- It is usual practice that the contractor's name, but not their company logo will appear in the report.

- The BCO will manage the design and production elements of any final report. This stage may be undertaken in partnership with the research contractor depending on the opportunities available and offered, and upon the agreement originally reached.
- The successful contractors will be expected to support BCO public relations efforts to launch the report, acting as the authoritative authors of the research work and speaking to the press through the offices of the BCO public relations company. Contractors should consider the presentation of at least one workshop as part of their fee. Further support by the contractors may be open to favourable negotiation.

## **The tendering process**

### **Form of Tender**

All proposals should include:

- details of the proposed methodology for preparing and undertaking the programme of research
- a detailed schedule of work including the number of days allowed for each member of the research team at each stage
- details of the proposed individual or team, including specific skills and relevant experience (including a short CV)
- details of the roles and responsibilities of each team member in relation to the proposed research method and project management
- details of any sub-contract proposals

### **Criteria for Evaluating Tenders**

Each tender will be judged on performance against the following value for money criteria:

- how well they address the research objectives
- the quality of the ideas presented
- the relevant skills and experience of the research team
- the robustness and suitability of the proposed approach in meeting the requirements of the specification
- the adequacy of the proposed project management arrangement
- the track record of the tenderer in delivering quality and succinct reports to schedule – using plain English

Tenderers will need to demonstrate that they have the following attributes:

- an understanding of office design, sustainability, and particularly low carbon technologies and the current debate on the creation of low carbon economy
- a strong research background
- an ability to produce practical advice in a clear, succinct and user-friendly form, with a minimum of technical jargon, including quality illustrations and other visual material in support if applicable
- an ability to work closely with the Research and Policy Director throughout the project.

At times tenderers are encouraged to bid in partnership with other organisations to ensure the optimum width of professional skills. In this case it may be more appropriate for a single contractor to undertake the project, however the BCO is not against a team of different firms, each with particular specialisms being drawn together and applying jointly to undertake this project with one company in the lead as overall project manager.

Following the written tender process, the BCO may call up to four tenderers for an interview to present their ideas and proposed methodology. It will be expected that those team members nominated in the tender to deliver the project will attend the interview. Arrangements will be made as necessary.

### **Quality and risks**

In considering tenders, the BCO will pay attention to the tenderer's internal project management arrangements and to the quality plan and monitoring arrangements that they propose, including measures to deal with potential risks to the programme.

### **Project Management**

The project will be managed under BCO's standard framework consultancy contract, a copy of which can be provided. The contractor will be supervised by Mike Beaven, Chairman of the Environmental Sustainability Committee, and Ian Selby, Research and Policy Director, who will act as Contract Manager for the project. The BCO will expect a named member of the contractor's staff to be in sole charge of the project.

In addition to individual event reports, the Contractor will be required to submit a brief (maximum 1 side of A4) monthly report covering progress on timetable, data collection, findings, staff changes and any issues that affect or could affect progress.

## **Timetable**

The closing date for receipt of research proposals is **12.00pm on Monday 14th April 2008**.

It is expected that interviews may take place during the weeks of either **21st April or 28th 2008**.

It is envisaged work will take three months to complete with work beginning in mid May approximately, with an interim report ready for comment by August 2008 and the final draft report ready for initial comment by September 2008. The final publication will be signed off by BCO in the beginning of October 2008. Tenderers should comment on the timetable in the context of their proposed methods and approach, suggesting amendments as necessary.

## **Budget**

The BCO wishes to procure the above services through a framework contract with a selected partner.

Tenders should give a breakdown of charges to cover the research element.

The approximate budget for this project is between £20 to £30K, however, it may be possible to renegotiate the scope of the contract.

Each figure should be presented exclusive of VAT and the tender should state on what items VAT will be charged. Travel and subsistence costs should always be included in the fees proposed. Only in exceptional circumstances will other arrangements be considered.

## **Payment arrangements**

Payments will be made in on completion of agreed milestones.

## **General**

Any information supplied by the client to the contractor during the project must be returned no later than one month after the end of the contract period. A copy of any materials used during the research programme will be required by the BCO for retention. The contractors will not use the information generated by the project for any purpose other than to meet the terms of the contract, unless given prior consent by BCO.

**Please note** that in making its decision and informing all those who have submitted tenders for this and all tendered work or projects, the BCO is not in a position to advise those who are not selected at any stage in this process with an explanation for, and reasons for, their unsuccessful submissions.

### **Further information**

Any queries regarding this specification should be addressed to

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Research and Policy Director  
BCO  
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E [ian.selby@bco.org.uk](mailto:ian.selby@bco.org.uk)

### ***Deadline for tenders***

*Tender should be submitted by email no later than 12.00pm on Monday 14th April 2008 to Dr. Ian Selby at the above address.*