



COMMERCIAL IN CONFIDENCE

**Framework Agreement for the
Provision of Professional Services for
Monitor Farm Scotland Programme
2025-2027**

Statement of Requirements

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Statement of Requirements

1. Background

Quality Meat Scotland (QMS) is Scotland's red meat development body. A Non-Departmental Public Body (NDPB) since 1st April 2008, QMS has a remit to shape a sustainable and prospering Scottish red meat industry.

The Monitor Farm Scotland initiative is managed by Quality Meat Scotland with support from AHDB and fully funded by the Scottish Government, aiming to help improve the productivity, profitability and sustainability of Scottish farm businesses.

The aim of the programme is to establish a group of farms to serve as monitor farms to help improve the profitability, productivity and sustainability of producers through practical demonstrations, the sharing of innovative and best practice and the discussion of up-to-date issues.

The current programme, launched in 2022, has established a core of 9 Monitor Farmers, each with a management group of 10-20 farmers/industry representatives and a wider community group.

Annual outputs per Monitor Farm include:

- 4-6 management group meetings
- 2 open meetings
- 1 cluster meeting
- 1 video
- Plus ongoing written articles and social media content

Scottish agriculture is currently in the midst of its most transformational period in generations. An increased focus on the environmental footprint of farming, as well as increased pressure on profitability have created a greater need for change than ever before.

To allow Scottish farming to fulfil its potential both economically and environmentally, an innovative approach to knowledge transfer is needed. Combining industry buy-in, detailed data collection, and enhancing the knowledge, skills, and competence of the industry, this programme can provide the information that is essential for driving Scotland's food and drink sector forward, through strengthening rural economies and meeting Scotland's climate change targets.

The programme aims to deliver support to the farming community through 3 tiers

1. Direct Support to Monitor Farmers
2. Community Support from expert speakers
3. Innovation Projects

1. Direct Support to Monitor Farmers

The success of the programme is dependent on showcasing transition through the 9 Monitor Farms. The Monitor Farms have been selected based upon their openness to change and relatability to local farming communities. To influence change and encourage adoption of new practices, the Monitor Farms require 1:1 support on technical topics which will vary throughout the programme. A farm fact file for each Monitor Farm is attached with this tender.

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The Monitor Farms are geographically split into 3 clusters:

North Cluster

- Strathspey
- Banff and Buchan
- Deeside

West Cluster

- Stirlingshire
- South Ayrshire
- Argyll

South Cluster

- Dumfries
- Roxburgh
- East Lothian

2. Community Support through Expert Speakers

The knowledge exchange aspect of the Monitor Farm programme is largely delivered through on farm, face to face meetings.

The ethos of the programme is '*Farmer Led, Farmer Driven*'. Each Monitor Farm has a management group of other local farmers, business people and industry. The average group size is 15 and they meet 4 to 6 times per year. Members of these groups are encouraged to collect data and benchmark their performance alongside the Monitor Farmers to encourage the uptake of new ideas, thinking and technologies. Management group members are actively encouraged to give constructive feedback to Monitor Farmers and fellow group members, as well as steering future discussion topics.

Each Monitor Farm holds 2 open meetings per year, with one of these on the host farm. Average attendance at open meetings is 62. The aim of these meetings is to showcase the work that has been done on the Monitor Farm that year and provide an opportunity to discuss key challenges that area is facing. The management group have a large input into these meetings to ensure the appropriate topic and guest speakers are selected.

Other routes of communication for the programme include:

- Written publications
- Online articles
- Blogs
- Videos
- Podcasts

The Monitor Farm programme looks to expert individuals or organisations to cover specific and relevant technical subjects. The topics that will be covered over the course of the programme include but are not limited to:

- Livestock production
- Arable production
- Farm business financial analysis
- Pasture production, utilisation & grazing systems

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- Wintering strategies (including forage crops)
- Soil management and fertility
- Animal health
- Minerals for livestock production
- Ruminant nutrition
- Pasture species and mixtures - selection, establishment and management
- Crop selection, establishment, harvest/utilisation
- Resource use efficiency
- Business management
- Financial planning and decision making
- HR and labour management
- Succession and business planning
- Biodiversity and ecological impact

3. Innovation Projects

The Monitor Farm Programme aims to help develop and deliver pioneering research into making real on-farm change on Scottish family farms through offering support for innovative projects, demonstrating bold concepts, that can be applied to the wider industry and will have scientific, and practical credibility that will raise levels of knowledge and understanding within the sector and provide a tangible benefit for producers and researchers.

The trial work should aim to merge business profitability and environmental benefits, through reducing emissions and increasing efficiency. Monitor Farmers and other members of the community groups develop proposals for bespoke projects of their own design, to demonstrate innovative work on-farm with scientific and research partners. Specialist support is required on these projects through

- project management
- data collection and interpretation
- technical advice and support
- dissemination to wider audiences.

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2. Service Requirements

QMS is seeking specialists to help deliver the specialist support to Monitor Farmers and their communities. The main requirements are for;

- One to one support for each Monitor Farm
- Technical input for face-to-face events, written or digital publications and communications requirements
- Technical input or project management for innovation projects

Due to the range of specialisms required, and the geographical spread of the work, QMS are looking to operate a Framework Agreement with a panel of contractors. Depending on the meeting topic, or farmer to be visited, QMS will decide on the most appropriate contractor(s), according to their skills, ability and relevant experience to provide expert speaking, or advice on relevant aspects of the selected topic.

One-to-one advice requirements

- The Monitor Farm programme gives high level of support to the nine Monitor Farm businesses. The requirement for support is to dig deep under the surface of these businesses to question the 'how' and the 'why' and share findings with local communities. Topics likely covered through one-to-one advice requirements may include but are not limited to financial and technical performance, enterprise costings, tailored agronomy support, tailored livestock nutrition support, animal health and welfare

Technical input for face-to-face events, written or digital publications and communications requirements

- Monitor Farm open meetings aim to have expert speakers to cover specific relevant livestock and arable production topics. The topic for each meeting will help build on knowledge gained from the previous events. A visit to a nearby farm usually forms part of the meeting, except during winter. Depending on location, meetings generally have between 30-60 farmers attending.

To maximise learning, and help share knowledge within the groups, meetings should be fun, interactive and participatory, rather than lecture based.

- Management meetings are more intimate with participants having deeper discussions with a closed group. The requirement is for 'conversation sessions' to share knowledge and experience, rather than more formal presentations. These meetings should be interactive and participatory. Attendees could be asked to prepare ahead of the meeting if appropriate.
- QMS are responsible for promoting meetings and will issue press releases before and after meetings. There will be a requirement for contractors to check and sign-off timeously any press release relevant to a meeting they are involved in, or farmer they have advised
- Monitor Farm Scotland compliments face-to-face knowledge exchange by producing technical guides, publications, press articles, videos and podcasts to support the key topics being discussed at meetings. There is a requirement for technical input or support for written publications, handouts, videos and handouts.

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Technical input and project management for innovation projects

- The trial and innovation work should aim to merge business profitability and environmental benefits, through reducing emissions and increasing efficiency.
- Monitor Farmers and other members of the community groups develop proposals for bespoke projects of their own design, to demonstrate innovative work on-farm with scientific and research partners. Specialist support is required on these projects through project management; data collection and interpretation; technical advice and support and dissemination to wider audiences.
- The Monitor Farm Scotland Programme holds ownership of any processed data or publications produced from these projects. As a KTIF funded project, all materials produced as part of the project by the delivery team or contractors should be made available via the Monitor Farm website.

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3. Framework Operation

The framework will operate initially **from 5th April 2025 until 31st March 2027**. Framework Suppliers will be expected to maintain their submitted Daily Rates for that period.

The number of Suppliers on the framework will depend on the number and quality of tenders received.

Acceptance of a tender and inclusion on the framework does not guarantee the offer of any work.

Individual contracts (call-offs) offered under the framework are all expected to be under £15,000 per annum. Which suppliers are approached to quote for an individual contract will be determined by means of an assessment of framework supplier(s) with the most relevant and suitable skills and expertise to undertake the work.

4. Performance Monitoring

Performance will be assessed from feedback obtained by QMS from meeting attendees, or individuals receiving one to one advice. Dissatisfaction reported will be further investigated and may result in no further use of that Supplier under this Framework.

5. Quotation Submissions

The deadline for submitting **tenders is 17:00 28th March 2025**

QMS is not bound to accept the lowest-priced, or any, tender. Tenderers shall bear their own costs and expenses relating to this tender exercise.

Daily Rates submitted by tenderers must be exclusive of VAT. Tenderers' VAT status should be noted in their submission.

The final decision on a tender being declared void or non-compliant shall rest with QMS.

6. Procurement Timetable

The intended timetable for this procurement process is detailed below. Every effort will be made to inform those invited to tender of any substantial delays to any part of these timescales.

Activity	Date
Invite quotes for Framework Agreement	1 st March 2025
Deadline for receipt of tenders (17:00 hours)	26 th March 2025
Evaluation of tenders complete	2 nd April 2025
Notify all tenderers of decision	4 th April 2025
Framework commences	7 th April 2025

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7. Terms and conditions

The tender must include CV's of key staff to be involved and contact details for two referees who can substantiate the bidder's ability to deliver the contracted services.

QMS will treat all tenders received as "Commercial - In Confidence". In turn bidders are required to keep all communications and documentation between themselves and QMS confidential both during and after the tendering process.

Bidders should advise QMS as soon as practicable if any conflict of interest arises in respect of the tender. In such circumstances, QMS may reserve the right to disqualify the bidder from the tender process.

In selecting the successful tender QMS will consider best value for money and may, therefore, not automatically accept the lowest bid.

The Monitor Farm Scotland Programme cannot guarantee a set amount of work for contractors and reserves the right to allocate work to competing contractors if this is in the best interest of the programme.

Each tender submission is subject to QMS terms and conditions of services [QMS | Terms & Conditions](#)

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8. Evaluation criteria

QMS evaluate tenders against qualitative as well as quantitative criteria. The successful bid is therefore the one that is deemed “the most economically advantageous tender” and this may not necessarily be the lowest-priced bid but overall best value. The successful bid will be the one which scores highest overall against both Price and Quality, as detailed below.

Criterion	Weighting
Price Daily Rate excluding VAT (include all relevant personnel) Daily rate when travelling (if different)	35%
Quality Experience of Proposed Personnel – Please submit full details of your relevant knowledge, skills and experience, detailing how these will be applied to successfully delivering advice and services under the contract. Ensure your submission clearly identify which areas from the above specification you are including in your tender and what are not (this should be clear by using the linked form). <u>Essential</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Strong technical knowledge and practical experience of technical topic for tender, and/or ruminant production and/or arable production• Relevant skills and practical experience supporting livestock/arable farmers to improve their performance• Relevant experience of presenting to and engaging with farmer groups using interactive and participative methods• A good understanding of livestock/arable production systems in Scotland• Excellent verbal communication skills• Flexibility in dealing with different levels of technical knowledge amongst the farmer groups, or individuals• A proven track record in providing one to one advice in a farm business setting	65%
TOTAL	100%

Tenders may be disqualified if they:

- are considered ‘abnormally low’;
- fail to provide information requested;

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Scores awarded against the above weighted criteria will be on the following basis:

Evaluation	Description	Scoring
Unacceptable	Nil or inadequate response. It fails to demonstrate an ability to meet the requirement.	-1
Poor	Response is partially relevant but poor. It addresses some elements of the requirement but contains insufficient and/or limited explanation to demonstrate how the requirement will be fulfilled.	0
Acceptable	Response is relevant and acceptable. It addresses a broad understanding of the requirement but may lack details in how the requirement will be fulfilled.	1
Good	Response is relevant and good. It is sufficiently detailed to demonstrate a good understanding and provides details on how the requirement will be fulfilled.	2
Outstanding	Response is completely relevant and excellent overall. It is comprehensive, unambiguous and demonstrates a thorough understanding of the requirement and provides robust detail and innovation.	3

9. Data Protection requirements

Everyone has rights regarding how their personal information is handled. While fulfilling the terms for which you have been contracted, you may collect, store and process personal information, and we need to be satisfied that you will recognise the need to treat such information in an appropriate and lawful manner.

The information, which may be held on paper, on a computer or other media, is subject to certain legal safeguards specified within the Data Protection Act 2018 (the Act), UK GDPR and other regulations. The Act imposes restrictions on how you may use that information.

To meet QMS requirements, we need to be satisfied that prospective suppliers are competent to undertake the work described and have sufficient data protection policies and procedures in place.

To this end, we require you to submit the following information:

- i) A copy of your Data Protection Policy Statement setting out your rules on data protection and indicating your knowledge of the legal conditions that must be satisfied in relation to the obtaining, handling, processing, storage, transportation and destruction of personal information.
- ii) A statement of your current procedures for storing, processing and maintaining security in respect of personal information.

If contractors fail to provide suitable information, they may be regarded as 'non-compliant'.

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10. Insurance and Health & Safety

As part of any client/contractor relationship, both parties have duties under Health & Safety legislation. Similarly, if a contractor employs sub-contractors to carry out some or all of the work contained within the specification given for the contract, all parties have health and safety responsibilities. The extent of the responsibilities of each party will depend on the individual circumstances of the project.

In order to meet QMS requirements, we need to be satisfied that prospective contractors are competent to undertake the work described and have health & safety policies and procedures in place.

To this end, we require you to submit the following information: -

- A copy of your Health and Safety Policy Statement
- A statement showing your 'Safe Method of Operation' and any generic Risk Assessments for the type of work you intend carrying out (if applicable).
- A copy of both your Professional Liability Insurance certificate, Public Liability Insurance certificate and, where appropriate, Employer's Liability Insurance certificates, or other evidence of insurance cover (e.g. a broker's letter).

If contractors fail to provide suitable information, in particular a Health & Safety Policy and evidence of insurance (as requested above), their tender will be regarded as 'non-compliant'.

11. Tender Submission and Checklist

- Tenders can be submitted by completing an online application via this link: <https://forms.gle/k9iPtbn3eTgU6N78>
- Supporting evidence should be submitted to baalexander@qmscotland.co.uk
- Supporting evidence should include:
 - i. Details of all personnel proposed, including full details of relevant skills, knowledge and experience
 - ii. Copies of relevant Insurance certificates
 - iii. Copy of Health and Safety policy