

Request for Proposal

Forecasting Tipping Points: Future climate innovators programme

SECTION 1: INFORMATION AND CONDITIONS

Introduction

We are pleased to invite you to take part in this Request for Proposal (RFP).

ARIA is an R&D funding agency. We fund teams of scientists and engineers to pursue research at the edge of what is technologically or scientifically possible. ARIA was established by the UK Government in January 2023 with high levels of autonomy and flexibility. From climate change to AI and bioengineering, society faces enormous challenges and opportunities that can be uniquely addressed by science and technology. ARIA was created to activate the UK's world-class R&D talent in new ways, so that we can meet these head on.

We are looking for a partner organisation who can deliver a youth-led competition as part of the [Forecasting Tipping Points](#) programme. Our discovery process has highlighted systemic barriers that could impede the long-term impact of our programme. Climate change affects everyone, so it is vital that we include people of all backgrounds and encourage the next generation of climate scientists and technologists to engage with our programme.

The Requirement

A youth-led competition to improve equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI) in Earth and space science. We have been inspired to develop and deliver a youth-led outreach programme, designed to engage the next generation of climate innovators. We're looking to demonstrate that new mode of citizen science. The initiative will capitalise on the ability of space science to captivate the imagination and the enthusiasm of the next generation to take on climate change.

We anticipate having a single lead organisation that delivers the future climate innovators programme and liaises with existing national rocketry competition(s) for an annual deployment demonstration.

- a. The programme would run in secondary schools across the UK, particularly enriched for areas of low participation in higher education.

- b. The content will be delivered by university students or early career professionals.
- c. For each cohort, the activity will run over a full academic year and expose school students to the science of climate tipping points and why they are important, alongside the remote sensing technologies that are used to monitor them.
- d. The activity will culminate in the creation of a sensor system for climate measurement at the end of each academic year.
- e. We envisage supporting a national (all parts of England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland) competition where all participating schools can come together to launch their sensor systems at a common location (coordinated by an operating partner).

The objectives of this work are to:

- Improve diversity in science technology engineering and mathematics (STEM) subjects.
- Increase the number of applications to study STEM subjects at university.
- Engage university students in leadership activities, identify young talent and capture ideas from them within the Programme.
- Perform scientific research in a citizen science model by using the outputs of the sensor systems.

Implementation and Deployment Timeline

The first national scale delivery of the programme should start in schools in September 2025 and the first competition should take place in Summer Term 2026. The preparation for this can start any time after funding is awarded and may involve delivery of a pilot scale initiative at a local level prior to September 2025. The funding is initially in place to support two academic years of the programme (2025/26 and 2026/27), but could be extended for another two years depending on performance.

Key Contract Terms

The contract will be placed on mutually agreed terms and conditions (T&Cs) proposed by the bidder. Any proposed T&Cs must reflect the key terms identified below including the proposed performance indicators (PIs). The proposed T&Cs will be assessed as part of the assessment criteria.

Key terms include:

- Pricing and Payment will be based on time and materials, paid in arrears (either monthly or quarterly)
- The supplier will work with ARIA's Communications team to agree any communications around the launch of the youth programme. In any case, the supplier will comply with ARIA's brand attribution requirements and ensure that any external communications are reviewed and agreed with ARIA's communications team.

- The supplier will work the ARIA Programme directors in the development of the youth programme
- Either party shall have the right to terminate the contract or part of the contract for convenience upon ninety days' prior notice.
- ARIA shall have the right to terminate the contract or part of the contract where the supplier fails to provide the requirement contracted upon thirty days' prior notice.
- The supplier shall indemnify ARIA, its employees, officers and agents against the supplier's infringement of third party Intellectual Property Rights.
- All information shared with the supplier shall be subject to confidentiality terms.

The proposed contract will be managed against PIs which will measure the service quality. PIs will be further developed with the successful bidder during the contract negotiation period, will form part of the contract and will be assessed on a quarterly basis thereafter. PIs include:

- Development of evaluation criteria and metrics of success for each cohort (agreed with Programme Directors).
- Delivery of the programme in 10 different areas of the UK over the course of a full academic year.
- Engagement of >500 students.
- Evaluation of performance of the programme in improving recruitment and retention of students in climate science and related fields following the end of each cohort.

Procurement Timeline

The dates in the following timetable are provisional and may be subject to change at the reasonable discretion of ARIA.

Event	Date
Issue RFP document	09.08.24
Deadline for submission of clarification questions	23.08.24
Submission of final Proposal in response to this RFP	04.09.24 (12:00 BST)
Presentation by Bidders to ARIA selection panel	13 and 17.09.24
Preferred bidder chosen and informed	20.09.24
Target Award date	27.09.24

Clarification Questions

Bidders are urged to review the RFP documentation, identify and submit any clarification request to clarifications@aria.org.uk no later than 18:00 (BST) 23.08.24. Clarification requests received after this date will not be reviewed.

Any clarification request or responses containing information that is of relevance to all bidders will be provided to all bidders that confirm their intention to participate. Answers to clarification requests will also be posted to the [ARIA website](#), following the deadline for submission of clarification requests. If bidders do not wish a query or response to be disclosed to other bidders, they must communicate this and the reason why, with the clarification question.

SECTION 2: REVIEW AND SELECTION PROCESS

Selection criteria

The appointed provider will be selected against both their written response and presentation according to the following criteria:

- A. **Background and Experience** - A clear demonstration of experience in the R&D sector and the provision of project and programme management expertise
- B. **Your Approach** - A clear articulation of what you see as our requirements and how you would meet them
- C. **Ability to scale** - Demonstrate your ability to scale and bring in further expertise
- D. **Commercial Proposal** - Commercial terms that demonstrate value for the tax-payer, including market comparables
- E. **Contractual terms** - Terms and conditions that demonstrate value for the tax-payer

SECTION 4: PROPOSAL RESPONSE STRUCTURE

Bidders are invited to set out how they propose to deliver the Services outlined within this RFP. The format below is set out as a guide and represents a maximum length response. If Bidders chose to respond in a different format this will be acceptable as long as sufficient information is provided to be comparable to this format of response.

Executive Summary

Summarise how you will deliver the key services you are proposing and how these relate to ARIA's requirements.

Criteria A - Background and Experience

Company Background, Profile and Experience

- A brief overview of the company structure, history, values and mission statement
- What are your approximate revenue, staff numbers and client numbers linked to the Services. Provide information on your overall client base; for example, primary vertical markets and/or other major clients supported

Criteria B - Your Approach

- A clear articulation of what you see as our requirements and how you would meet them, setting out the delivery model you would use for this service including your proposed plan for delivery and any proposed milestones
- Provide your management and oversight structures that you would apply to this service
- Set out how you will assure the quality of your service
- Provide examples of when you have worked well with cross functional teams.

Case studies

- Provide a maximum of two examples/case studies, where your organisation has provided a similar service. Provide a summary of key successes, issues, mitigating actions and overall learnings for the ARIA contract. With their consent, please include:
 - Business name
 - Contact name, email.

With bidders prior consent, ARIA may choose to verify case studies with the referees as part of the proposal review process.

Criteria C - Ability to scale

- Provide examples of your ability to scale and flex to meet changing demands
- Clear demonstration supported by evidence of access to a wider pool of individuals with specialist experience and subject matter or market expertise in their programme areas.

Criteria D - Commercial Proposal

More details on the information required can be found in the application portal ([here](#)). This information should be submitted directly in the application portal when submitting responses:

- A breakdown of estimated costs, including:
 - Labour, Materials, Subcontract, Equipment & facilities, Other & Indirect costs

- Any additional costs which are likely to be incurred through the life of the contract.
- Identify any critical dependencies on ARIA required by the bidder in order to successfully execute any resultant Contract.

Criteria E - Contractual Terms

- Provide acceptance of key contract terms and conditions detailed above and submission of proposed PIs identified within the RFP.
- Any proposed additional PIs

Additional requirements

The Bidder shall confirm as part of its submission adherence to the following requirements. Evidence in the form of copies of relevant certification must be provided as part of the submission and can be provided as an annex to the bidder’s proposal:

Mandatory:

- All data to be stored within the UK or EEA
- [Cyber Essentials certification](#), if a bidder does not currently hold Cyber Essential Certification, bidders can in their response to this RFP, propose a date by which the certification will be obtained. This must be supported by a credible plan, setting out how the certification will be achieved by the date proposed
- Confirmation of adherence with the [Government’s supplier Code of Conduct](#).

Desirable

- Cyber Essentials Plus

Format of Proposal Submission:

Format	PDF. Pages should be numbered, and the response should include the bidder’s name inserted as a header
Page Guide	3 pages excluding cost breakdown and evidence of mandatory/desirable requirements
Responses to	https://aria.grantplatform.com/
Deadline for Submission	12:00 BST, 04.09.2024

Presentations

The format of presentations will be advised to those invited to attend.

SECTION 3: CONDITIONS OF RFP

Confidentiality, Publicity, Conduct and Conflicts of Interest:

The contents of this RFP is confidential and must not be not copied, reproduced, distributed or passed to any other person at any time except for the purpose of enabling the bidder to submit a proposal. ARIA may use the information included in a bidder's response for any reasonable purpose connected with this RFP. In particular, once a bidder has been excluded, ARIA reserves the right to use any ideas contained in that bidder's proposal in any ongoing discussions with other bidders but undertakes not to reveal the identity of the provider of these ideas. No publicity regarding the subject-matter of this RFP or the award of any Contract will be permitted unless and until ARIA has given express written consent to the relevant communication.

ARIA reserves the right to: a) waive or change the requirements of this RFP from time to time without prior (or any) notice being given by ARIA, in the event ARIA makes material changes to this RFP, ARIA may choose to extend the deadline for submission. b) reject any bidder that does not submit a compliant Proposal in accordance with the instructions in this RFP. c) disqualify any bidder that is guilty of serious misrepresentation in relation to its Proposal, d) withdraw this RFP at any time, or to re-invite Bidders on the same or any alternative basis; e) choose not to award any Contract as a result of the current procurement process; and f) make whatever changes it sees fit to the Timetable, structure or content of the procurement process, depending on approvals processes or for any other reason. ARIA will not be liable for any bidder's costs, expenditure, work or effort incurred by them in carrying out enquiries in relation to, proceeding with, or participating in, this RFP, sourcing process or procurement, including if the procurement process is terminated or amended by ARIA.

Suppliers are expected to adhere to the Government's supplier Code of Conduct. This is available at https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/779660/20190220-Supplier_Code_of_Conduct.pdf.

Any attempt by bidders or their advisors to influence the contract award process in any way may result in the Bidder being disqualified. Specifically, bidders shall not directly or indirectly, at any time: a) enter into any agreement or arrangement with any other person as to the form or content of any other Proposal, or offer to pay any sum of money or valuable consideration to any person to effect changes to the form or content of any other Proposal; b) enter into any agreement or arrangement with any other person that has the effect of prohibiting or excluding that person from submitting a Proposal; c) canvass ARIA or any employees or agents of ARIA in relation to this

sourcing process; or d) attempt to obtain information from any of the employees or agents of ARIA or their advisors concerning another bidder or proposal. Bidders are responsible for ensuring that no conflicts of interest exist between the bidder and its advisors, and ARIA and its advisors. Any Bidder who fails to comply with this requirement may be disqualified from the procurement at the discretion of ARIA.

Bidders recognise and accept that it will be at ARIA's sole discretion as to which, if any, proposal is accepted.

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Clarification Questions and Responses

Does ARIA have a preference for the age range of participants in the Future Climate Innovators programme?

We were thinking Year 9 students, but we are open to suggestions for the most impactful age to target.

Do you have an existing relationship with the national rocketry competitions(s) cited in the RFP?

No, we do not.

Do you have preferred areas of geographic focus for programme delivery, or shall we suggest these?

We would like geographic diversity within the programme delivery.

Is the bidder required to recruit and train the university students / early career professionals? Do we need to factor payment for their time into proposed costs?

Yes, please include this in your proposal.

Could ARIA advise on how much time you'd like each cohort to commit to the Future Climate Innovators programme?

We were thinking ~1 hour per week through the academic year, but we are open to suggestions for a more effective set up.

Are you able to share a budget range for the delivery of the Future Climate Innovators programme and deployment demonstration event?

The budget range is £0.4m - £0.6m for the set up and 2 years of programme delivery.

Is the bidder required to evaluate the programme or will ARIA lead on this?

Bidders should lead this (in collaboration with ARIA).

Will ARIA provide the science and technological expertise or should we include our approach to this in our response?

Bidders should include their approach to this, but this can be performed in collaboration with ARIA and scientists in the ARIA programme.

How does ARIA define market comparables?

Our intention behind asking for market comparables is to understand the basis on which you have constructed your commercial proposal e.g. day rates and any applicable discounts.

What do you foresee ARIA's role being in the design and delivery of the Future Climate Innovators programme? Specifically, what tasks would you undertake in-house and what would you expect the agency to do?

ARIA would like to be involved in the design, but the delivery will be entirely led by the agency team.

How many members of the ARIA team will be dedicated to the day-to-day running of the Future Climate Innovators programme?

The ARIA programme team (2 Programme Directors, 1 Technical Specialist and 1 Programme Specialist) will be involved in evaluation of the programme, but will not be involved in the day to day running.

Would the successful bidder be expected to source these content providers?

Yes, the successful bidder will find and train the content providers.

Would the successful bidder be responsible for organising the national competition in Summer Term 2026?

Yes, the successful bidder will be responsible for either organising the national competition, or organising ARIA's involvement in an already existing national competition.