

Invitation to tender: Public perceptions survey

Summary

1. We are seeking a market research agency to conduct an annual quantitative survey with patients and members of the public across the UK to explore their views and experiences of optical services.
2. We have carried out this [survey](#) since 2015 exploring areas such as satisfaction levels with sight tests, confidence and trust in the optical professions, shopping habits and technology advancements.
3. The tender is for three waves of the survey over 2024-26. We have an approved budget of up to **£50,000 including VAT and all other contractor costs across the three waves**. Proposals over £50,000 will not be considered. However, in addition to the total cost, we would like agencies to provide separate costings to carry out multivariate analysis.
4. **The deadline for tenders is 5pm 30 October 2023.**

About the GOC

5. We are the regulator for the optical professions in the UK and our mission is to protect and promote the health and safety of the public. We currently register around 33,000 optometrists, dispensing opticians, student optometrists, student dispensing opticians and optical businesses.
6. We have four core functions:
 - Setting standards for the performance and conduct of our registrants.
 - Approving qualifications leading to registration.
 - Maintaining a register of individuals who are fit to practise or train as optometrists or dispensing opticians, and bodies corporate who are fit to carry on business as optometrists or dispensing opticians.
 - Investigating and acting where registrants' fitness to practise, train or carry on business may be impaired.
7. An important part of our policy and research work is to carry out an annual survey with members of the public and patients across the UK. We have carried out this survey since 2015 with the aim of understanding public views, perceptions, and experiences of receiving optical care. We use the findings to inform our policy work and we share the findings with stakeholder bodies across the optical sector.
8. For more information, please visit our website: <https://www.optical.org/>

Survey

9. As this is the eighth iteration of the survey, we already have a template survey to work from. We would like to keep the majority of questions from last year's survey enabling us to track views and experiences over time. We would also like the space to ask any new questions and would like the appointed agency to help draft and finalise these.
10. For segmentation purposes we want to continue to include questions on equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI), as well as questions on whether the respondent has any eye conditions; their employment status; and income (around 12-14 questions).
11. The survey needs to be robust and representative of the UK population aged 18+.
12. We would like to cover 'patients' and the 'general public' in the survey. Patients are defined as those who have been to an optometrist in the last two years. We suggest a 70% / 30% split between these two groups in the sample. The suggested quotas are representative of the population according to the previous surveys we have done.
13. We would like roughly the same sample size as the last three waves of the survey with a minimum of 2,000 people surveyed. As a UK regulator, it is important to detect differences in experiences across all four nations and that the results are representative. In line with the previous three waves of the survey, we anticipate that the quotas for Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland will need to be oversampled to allow for confident data analysis at a nation specific level and to allow confident analysis between countries.
14. We invite the tenderer(s) to advise on the best data collection method or methods for ensuring a representative sample and enable effective comparisons with the findings of the previous surveys.

Analysis

15. We would like the appointed agency to continue to analyse the data and draw out key differences particularly in relation to the nations and regions, protected characteristics, income and eye health conditions.
16. We would also like agencies to advise on the use of multivariate regression analysis to help identify the most important demographic factors and reduce reader speculation. We would like agencies to outline the pros and cons of using this approach as well as providing the cost (please see paragraphs 20 and 22).

Outputs

17. The appointed agency will be expected to deliver the following:
 - refine the questionnaire to meet the research aims;

- data collection;
 - data processing;
 - rigorous analysis of findings and drawing conclusions for the GOC;
 - production of a detailed written report (template to be agreed in advance with the GOC and include infographics) to publishable standards;
 - produce summary data tables suitable for lay people to understand, which will be published on GOC’s website; and
 - produce raw data tables to allow for further data analysis.
18. Producing visual materials that bring the findings to life and raise awareness is increasingly important to the GOC. Tenders should include examples of past work of a similar standard to what the agency would expect to produce for this survey. The costs of this work should be included within the total budget.

Budget

19. We have an approved budget of up to a total cost of £50,000 including VAT and all other contractor costs across the three waves of the survey. Proposals over £50,000 will not be considered.
20. In addition to our total budget, we would also like agencies to provide separate costings to carry out multivariate regression analysis, in the event that we choose to include this as part of the research.

Timetable

21. The timetable for this project is in the table below. (We reserve the right to alter this timetable.)

Task	Date
Contract advertised by GOC	25 September 2023
Deadline for bidders to submit clarification queries	13 October 2023
Deadline for tenders to be submitted	5pm 30 October 2023
Selection process by GOC	Week commencing 6 November 2023
Draft report submitted by agency	28 February 2024
Final report and all other outputs submitted by agency	31 March 2024

Proposals

22. Proposals should clearly state how agencies would meet the requirements set out in this invitation to tender. They should include:

- evidence of an understanding of our requirements;
- details of the project team, relevant skills and experience (including examples of relevant projects previously conducted) and specific project roles;
- details of any conflicts of interest that the agency or project team members may have relevant to this work and how these would be managed;
- details of any information or assistance that will be required from the GOC;
- details of how this project will be delivered, including the project management procedures and a research timetable for the different stages;
- an assessment of the key risks and how these will be mitigated; and
- a comprehensive itemised cost for all aspects of the work and the total cost of the project; and
- the separate costs to carry out multivariate regression analysis.

Selection process

23. Tenders will be evaluated carefully against the award criteria and weightings set out below:

- extent to which proposals demonstrate understanding of the brief, and meet its stated objectives in terms of research design (40%);
- the tenderer having appropriate skills, qualifications and a track record in delivering similar projects (20%);
- proposals relating to producing visual materials (20%); and
- the ability of the tenderer to deliver this project within the specified timescale and budget (20%).

24. All work should comply with the Code of Conduct of the Market Research Society.

25. The Council reserves the right to pay only for work it deems to be satisfactorily completed.

26. The Council is not bound to accept the lowest offer or any tender.

27. Following assessment of proposals, we reserve the right to request a further tender, proposals or pricing details from selected potential contractors.

GOC contacts

28. Please send tenders and direct any questions to Angharad Jones (Policy Manager) by email to ajones@optical.org

Data and Freedom of Information

29. The Freedom of Information Act 2000 ("FOIA") applies to the GOC and potential contractors should be aware of our obligations and responsibilities under FOIA to disclose, on written request, recorded information held by the GOC. Information provided by you in connection with this proposal, or with any contract that may be awarded as a result of this exercise, may therefore have to be disclosed in response to such a FOIA request, unless we decide that one of the statutory exemptions under the FOIA applies. If you wish to designate information supplied as part of this response as confidential, or if you believe that its disclosure would be prejudicial to any person's commercial interests, you must provide clear and specific detail as to the precise information involved. Such designation alone may not prevent disclosure if in our reasonable opinion publication is required by applicable legislation or Government policy or where disclosure is required by the Information Commissioner.

Warnings/Disclaimer

30. Offering an inducement of any kind in relation to obtaining this contract with the GOC will disqualify your proposal from being considered. You must not tell anyone else what your proposal or tender price is or will be, before the deadline for proposals. You must not try to obtain any information about anyone else's proposal or make any arrangements with another organisation about whether or not they should make a proposal, or about their or your tender price. Failure to comply with any of these conditions may disqualify your proposal.
31. Nothing contained in this ITT or any other communication made between the GOC or our representatives and any person shall constitute an agreement, contract or representation (except for the formal written contract between the GOC and our preferred supplier). Receipt by the tenderer of this ITT does not imply the existence of a contract or commitment by or with the GOC for any purpose and tenderers should note that this ITT may not result in the award of any business.
32. It is the responsibility of tenderers to obtain for themselves all information necessary for the preparation of their response to this ITT. The information contained in this ITT and the supporting documents and in any related written or oral communication is believed to be correct at the time of publication. The GOC will not accept any liability for its accuracy, adequacy or completeness and no warranty is given as such. We reserve the right to change any aspect of, or cease, the tender process at any time.

33. By issuing this ITT the GOC is not bound in any way and does not have to accept the lowest or any tender.

34. You will not be entitled to claim from us any costs or expenses which you may incur in preparing your tender whether or not your tender is successful and regardless of whether a contract is awarded.