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## **Invitation to Tender for the Provision of Access Services on S4C**

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|----------------------------------------------------|-------------------|
| Issued:                                            | 23/09/2026        |
| Deadline for receipt of request for clarification: | 02/10/2026        |
| Deadline for receipt of tender responses:          | 12:00, 20/11/2026 |

THIS DOCUMENT IS ALSO AVAILABLE IN WELSH

## **Introduction**

This document invites tenders from individuals, companies and organisations ("Tenderers") interested in and capable of supplying to S4C Access Services as more specifically described in the following pages.

This Invitation to Tender (ITT) is divided into the following parts:

- Part 1 Background Information
- Part 2 Contract Specific Information
- Part 3 Information to be included in Tender Responses
- Part 4 Outline of Tender Process and Requests for Further Information
- Part 5 Evaluation Criteria and Contract Award
- Part 6 Legal Notes

Appendix 1 - Draft Contract

Appendix 2 - Evaluation Matrix

Appendix 3 - Details of Access Services Lots

Lot 1: S4C's Subtitling Service;

Lot 2: S4C's Audio Description Service;

Lot 3: S4C's On-Screen Signing (BSL) Service.

Appendix 4 - Basic Information Form

**Please read this Invitation to Tender carefully. Tender responses that do not comply with the requirements set out in this Invitation to Tender may not be evaluated as part of this tender process.**

**Please note that this tender process, including this Invitation to Tender, is subject to the legal notes set out in Part 6.**

## **Part 1 Background Information**

### **1.1 S4C**

S4C is the only Welsh language television broadcaster service and one of the UK's five public service media organisations. It is an independent broadcasting authority established under the Broadcasting Act 1981, and regulated by the Communications Act 2003 and the Broadcasting Act 1990.

S4C provides a broad range of high quality and diverse Welsh language programming, over 115 hours each week broadcast on Sky, Freeview, Virgin, Smart TVs and available to watch live and on-demand on S4C Clic, BBC iPlayer, YouTube and other platforms. S4C also publishes short-form content via social media, and has a digital news service Newyddion S4C.

For further background information about S4C, please refer to the Annual Report 2025/2026 and S4C's 'More than a TV channel' 2025 Strategy available on the S4C website ([s4c.cymru](http://s4c.cymru)).

### **1.2 S4C and BBC Partnership**

All S4C transmission and technical support functions are contracted out by S4C to the BBC from Central Square, Cardiff.

S4C remains in control of and is responsible for the scheduling and editorial elements of all S4C Content and for the services tendered under this ITT ("the Services").

### **1.3 Contract Specific Background Information**

S4C's requirements for access services are currently being provided under the terms of separate contracts that are due to expire/terminate on 26th February 2027. In awarding a new contract(s) S4C wishes to maintain the quality of the service currently being provided. However, elements of the service will change.

Further information about the contract and S4C's requirements is set out in Part 2.

## **Part 2 Contract Specific Information**

### **2.1 S4C's Requirements**

S4C wishes to enter into one or more contract(s) for the following services. Tenders are being invited for one or more individual Lots (contracts).

The Services are divided into the following Lots (contracts):

**Lot 1 - S4C's Subtitling Service;**

**Lot 2 - S4C's Audio Description Service; and**

**Lot 3 - S4C's On-Screen Signing (BSL) Service.**

Tenderers may submit a tender for any number or combination of individual Lots (each a "Lot" or collectively "Lots").

Tenderers may wish to offer a reduced price for a package of Lots, this is permissible, please see further details at Part 3.2.

A further description of each of the Lots is available in Appendix 3.

### **2.2 Contract Duration and Terms**

The draft contract is attached at Appendix 1.

S4C may enter into one contract with one supplier for all three Lots or multiple contracts with several separate suppliers for one or two Lots.

#### Length of Contract(s)

The contract(s) will be for a period of four years with an option to extend for an additional two periods of 12 months.

#### Performance Review

The successful Tenderer(s) will be required to meet quarterly with S4C to review their performance under the contract(s) and to implement improvements if necessary. These meetings will also provide an opportunity to plan ahead for the requirements of the service in the next quarter.

S4C will review the contract(s) and the successful Tenderer(s)'s performance after the first three months and reserves the right to terminate the contract(s) at the end of this period following such a review. This review will be in addition to any regular reviews that are provided for in the contract(s).

#### Rights

The copyright and all other rights to the work created and supplied by the successful Tenderer(s) in providing the Services will be assigned to S4C.

No negotiation of the draft contract is permissible. Amendments to the draft contract to reflect the successful tender response and/or to clarify the terms of the draft

contract only are permitted. By submitting a tender response Tenderers are agreeing, if successful, to enter into a contract with S4C in the form set out in Appendix 1. Tenderers are asked to note in this context the provisions of Part 6.3.

### **2.3 Parent Company Guarantees and Consortia**

Please note that S4C may require the successful Tenderer(s) to provide a parent company guarantee. If a consortium submits a tender response which is acceptable to S4C, S4C may in its discretion require: (i) the consortium to form a legal entity before entering into the contract; and/or (ii) joint and several liability of all consortium members; and/or (iii) guarantees and/or undertakings by some or all of the consortium members in respect of some or all other consortium members.

### **2.4 Staffing Requirements**

S4C requires a consistent contact as the relationship holder for the contract.

### **2.5 Business Continuity Plan**

As part of the response, the successful Tenderer should provide details of a business continuity plan.

### **2.6 Handover/Set up Period**

The current provider will provide a handover of services provisions.

## **Part 3 Information to be Included in Tender Responses**

### **3.1 Required Information**

Tenderers should provide the following information as part of the tender response in order to demonstrate in detail how S4C's requirements will be met:

3.1.1 Completed **Basic Information Form** in the form set out in Appendix 4

3.1.2 A clear statement of the **Lot or Lots** to which the tender relates:

Lot 1 - S4C's Subtitling Service;

Lot 2 - S4C's Audio Description Service; and/or

Lot 3 - S4C's On-Screen Signing (BSL) Service.

3.1.3 A **methodology statement** setting out how the services required by each Lot, as described in Appendix 3 and in accordance with the award criteria at Part 5.2 will be delivered including appropriate workflow diagrams and/or a description of how the provision of the services will be ensured.

3.1.4 Details of the **fee(s)** required to provide the service(s) to S4C along with a suggested payment schedule. See Part 3.2 for more information.

3.1.5 Any legal comments arising out of the Legal Notes in Part 6 and Draft Contract set out in Appendix 1.

Tenderers may include additional information where relevant to their tender responses, but tender responses should not include any extraneous information not specifically requested or required by the ITT including, for example, sales literature and standard terms of trading.

Tender responses must remain open for a period of 3 months from the date for submission of tender responses.

If at any time the Tenderer (or, in the case of a tender response submitted by a consortium, any member of the consortium) becomes aware that any information which it (or, in the case of a tender response submitted by a consortium, any member of the consortium) has provided to S4C in connection with this tender process is incomplete, inaccurate or misleading in any respect or has ceased to be correct, S4C must be immediately notified thereof.

### **3.2 Fee**

S4C requires the fee for the services to be provided as a fixed hourly fee to include all set up costs, account management, administration, staffing, meetings and all other costs and expenses incurred in providing the service. This fixed fee must be expressed in or converted into pounds sterling, exclusive of VAT and must be fixed for the duration of the contract (subject to any provisions in the Contract relating to indexation).

In relation to Lot 1 – S4C's Subtitling Service, a separate fixed hourly fee should be provided for each subtitling requirement:

- Welsh Subtitles
- English Subtitles
- Live Welsh Subtitles
- Live English Subtitles
- Provision and accuracy checks of Subtitle Files for creation of Burnt in Subtitles versions.

S4C will provide the Wincaps software required for machines located at BBC Central Square used during live subtitling requirements.

The fixed hourly fees for each subtitling requirement shall be added together to determine a total price for Lot 1 and it is this total price that will be evaluated in accordance with Part 5.2 below.

Tenderers should clearly set out the hourly fee for each Lot and the suggested payment schedule. Each Lot must be priced separately.

These hours are an estimate used solely for the purposes of reaching an annualised value for the Service. S4C does not commit to a minimum number of hours for any element of the Services. The annual hourage may also vary to ensure compliance with Ofcom quotes.

#### Lot 1

|                           |           |
|---------------------------|-----------|
| Welsh Subtitling          | 700 hours |
| English Subtitling        | 625 hours |
| Live Subtitling - Welsh   | 477 hours |
| Live Subtitling - English | 250 hours |
| BIST                      | 120 hours |

#### Lot 2

|                   |           |
|-------------------|-----------|
| Audio Description | 240 hours |
|-------------------|-----------|

#### Lot 3

|                   |           |
|-------------------|-----------|
| On-Screen Signing | 130 hours |
|-------------------|-----------|

If Tenderers wish to provide two prices for Lots e.g. one price if the Tenderer is only successful in winning one Lot and a second price if more than one Lot is awarded to that Tenderer, such discounts will be considered in the comparison of tender costs.

### **3.3 Maximum Word Limit**

Tenderers should seek to be concise in drafting their response to this ITT. Tender responses should not exceed a word limit of 5,000 words for each Lot. S4C retains the right to exclude from the tender process any tender response that does not conform with this requirement.

The above word limit does not include any words contained within illustrations/diagrams/graphs included within and/or annexed to the main tender document.

## **Part 4 Outline of Tender Process and Requests for Further Information**

### **4.1 Outline of Tender Process**

This tender process will involve the following stages:

|         |                                                  |                            |
|---------|--------------------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| Stage 1 | Deadline for requests for clarification          | 12:00, 02/10/2026          |
| Stage 2 | Provide responses to request for clarification   | 16/10/2026                 |
| Stage 3 | Deadline for receipt of tender responses         | 12:00, 20/11/2026          |
| Stage 4 | Commencement of evaluation of tender responses * | 20/11/2026                 |
|         | Interviews (if required) *                       | 30/11/2026 -<br>04/12/2026 |
| Stage 5 | Notification of results of evaluation *          | 11/12/2026                 |
| Stage 6 | Signature of contract *                          | 18/12/2026                 |

Please note that dates marked \* may be subject to change.

### **4.2 Submission of Tender Responses**

Tenderers are required to submit a tender response in accordance with the requirements of this ITT electronically by the deadline for receipt of tender responses set out in Part 4.1 above.

Tender responses should be clearly marked **S4C Access Services Tender** and sent by e-mail to: **tendr@s4c.cymru**

Tenders may be submitted in Welsh or English. A tender submitted in Welsh will be treated no less favourably than a tender submitted in English.

NO TENDER RESPONSES RECEIVED AFTER THE DEADLINE FOR RECEIPT OF TENDER RESPONSES SET OUT IN PART 4.1 ABOVE OR RECEIVED BY S4C AT AN ADDRESS OTHER THAN THAT SET OUT ABOVE WILL BE CONSIDERED AND ANY SUCH TENDER RESPONSES WILL BE EXCLUDED FROM THIS TENDER PROCESS.

S4C accepts no responsibility for the shortcomings of any delivery system or for any lost, delayed or defective tender responses. It is up to Tenderers to ensure that their tender responses (and any attachments) are prepared in good time (taking into account the possibility of staff absences or technical failures) and are submitted in advance of the deadline for receipt of tender responses set out in Part 4.1 above.

Please note that 20Mb is the maximum email size that S4C can accept and permissible file formats are Word, Excel, PDF and Jpeg. These file formats are acceptable as Zip Files. Tenderers should be aware that their own ISP (Internet Service Provider) may impose lower limits on the maximum email capacity and as such are advised to check the size limit with their own ISP or IT department well in advance of despatch and deadline.

Proof of despatching will not be deemed to be proof of delivery and Tenderers are advised to seek an acknowledgement of receipt in a separate email.

### **4.3 Consideration of Tender Responses and Notification of Result**

S4C will consider all tender responses received by S4C in compliance with the requirements detailed in this ITT and all information provided at interview, if held, in accordance with the procedure and criteria detailed in Part 5 below.

### **4.4 Clarification of Tender Responses and Interviews**

S4C may require Tenderers to provide further information and/or clarification of any matters contained in their tender responses.

S4C may require Tenderers to attend interviews in Cardiff to clarify details set out in the tender response document, to explain how the Tenderer proposes to deliver each Lot included in the tender and to make a presentation. The interview may be conducted in Welsh or English. If you choose a Welsh interview, we will provide a translation service from Welsh to English if necessary.

Following completion of any interviews and/or presentations, S4C may confirm, increase, or decrease a Bidder's scores, where appropriate, to reflect the evaluators' improved understanding of the Bidder's Tender Response.

S4C reserves the right not to conduct interviews or request presentations where it determines that sufficient information has been provided in the written submission.

### **4.5 Requests for Further Information**

All contact in relation to this tender process including any requests for further information and/or guidance in completing tender responses must be made by email to S4C at [tendr@s4c.cymru](mailto:tendr@s4c.cymru)

Tenderers must not in any way canvass or solicit information relating to this tender process from any other officer, employee, agent or adviser of S4C.

Tenderers are encouraged to identify any further information and/or guidance that they may require in connection with this tender process as early as possible. The deadline for submission of requests for further information and/or guidance is set out at 4.1 above. Any requests received after this deadline will not be considered. S4C will endeavour to deal promptly with all requests received before this deadline.

In the interests of fairness and transparency please note that all requests for further information and/or guidance in respect of this tender process and S4C's responses to such requests will be disclosed to all Tenderers. Such disclosures will be made by posting such responses on the S4C website at [http://www.s4c.cymru/tendrau/e\\_index.shtml](http://www.s4c.cymru/tendrau/e_index.shtml)

If Tenderers consider any request for further information and/or guidance which they make to be commercially sensitive, they must clearly mark the request as "commercially sensitive" and supply the reasons why they consider it to be commercially sensitive. Please note, however, that S4C will determine, in its sole discretion, whether it considers any such request to be commercially sensitive. If S4C determines that a request is commercially sensitive S4C will not disclose the request or its response to such request to other Tenderers. If S4C determines that a request is not commercially sensitive it will inform the Tenderer. If the Tenderer agrees that the request is not commercially sensitive S4C will respond to the request and will be entitled to disclose the request and its response thereto to all Tenderers. If the Tenderer does not agree that the request is not commercially

sensitive or does not inform S4C whether or not it so agrees within a period of one working day, the request shall be deemed to be withdrawn and S4C will not respond to it. Nothing in this paragraph will be interpreted or construed as limiting in any way S4C's ability to disclose any information to any person in complying with its freedom of information obligations as outlined in Part 6.6 below.

Any requests and any responses thereto which are disclosed to all Tenderers will be deemed to form part of this ITT.

## Part 5 Evaluation Criteria and Contract Award

### 5.1 Compliance Testing

Prior to commencing formal evaluation of tender responses, S4C will check tender responses, in particular the Basic Information Form and the specific language requirements, to ensure that they are fully compliant with the requirements of the ITT. Noncompliant tender responses may be rejected. Fully compliant tender responses will be evaluated by S4C in accordance with the provisions set out in this Part 5.

### 5.2 Evaluation

The contract for each Lot will be awarded on the basis of the most advantageous tender. To assess which tender response is the most advantageous, a panel of S4C representatives will evaluate and score all responses to this ITT in accordance with the following criteria and weightings:

#### Compliance Questions:

|                                | Evaluation Criteria                  | Evaluation Method                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Basic Information Form:</b> |                                      |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| Section 1                      | Basic Information about the Tenderer | Not scored, but must be completed                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| Section 2                      | Basis for Mandatory Exclusion        | <b>Acceptable</b> – Completed with each response being “No”, or “Yes” with evidence of acceptable remedial action<br><b>Unacceptable</b> – Incomplete or any one or more responses being “Yes” without evidence of acceptable remedial action. |
| Section 3                      | Basis for Discretionary Exclusion    | <b>Acceptable</b> – Completed with each response being “No”, or “Yes” with evidence of acceptable remedial action<br><b>Unacceptable</b> – Incomplete or any one or more responses being “Yes” without evidence of acceptable remedial action. |
| Section 4                      | Additional Modules Insurance         | <b>Acceptable</b> – Completed with each response being “Yes”<br><b>Unacceptable</b> – Incomplete or any one or more responses being “No”.                                                                                                      |
|                                | Equality                             | <b>Acceptable</b> – Completed with response to Q1 and Q2 being “No”, or “Yes” with evidence of acceptable remedial action, and with response to Q3 being “Yes”.                                                                                |

|           |                          |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
|-----------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|           |                          | <b>Unacceptable</b> – Incomplete or response to Q1 and/or Q2 being “Yes” without evidence of acceptable remedial action, and/or response to Q3 being “No”.                                                                                                                                                                                            |
|           | Environmental Management | <p><b>Acceptable</b> – Completed with response to Q1 being “No”, or “Yes” with evidence of acceptable remedial action, and with response to Q2 being “Yes”.</p> <p><b>Unacceptable</b> – Incomplete or response to Q1 being “Yes” without evidence of acceptable remedial action and/or response to Q2 being “No”.</p>                                |
|           | Health and Safety        | <p><b>Acceptable</b> – Self-certification completed and response to Q2 being “No”, or “Yes” with evidence of acceptable remedial action and response to Q3 being “Yes”.</p> <p><b>Unacceptable</b> – Self-certification incomplete or response to Q2 being “Yes” without evidence of acceptable remedial action and/or response to Q3 being “No”.</p> |
|           | Data Protection          | <p><b>Acceptable</b> – Self-certification completed and response to Q2 being “No”, or “Yes” with evidence of acceptable remedial action and response to Q3 being “Yes”.</p> <p><b>Unacceptable</b> – Self-certification incomplete or response to Q2 being “Yes” without evidence of acceptable remedial action and/or response to Q3 being “No”.</p> |
| Section 5 | Declaration              | Not scored, but must be completed                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |

## Qualitative Questions:

### Lot 1 – S4C's Subtitling Services

| Award Criteria                              | Evaluation Questions and How will S4C evaluate the response                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | Weightings |
|---------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------|
| <b>Written Statement:</b>                   |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |            |
| <b>Company Experience and Key Personnel</b> | <p>Tenderers shall provide details of company experience in delivering:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Welsh Subtitles</li><li>• English Subtitles</li><li>• Live Subtitles in English and in Welsh</li><li>• Provision and accuracy checks of Subtitle Files for creation of Burnt in Subtitles versions.</li></ul> <p>Tenderers should describe their experience in delivering subtitling services for broadcasters, streaming platforms, or media organisations over the last five years, including experience in supporting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Live programming</li><li>• As live / Near-live programming</li><li>• Pre-recorded content</li><li>• Multi-platform delivery</li></ul> <p>Details should include the types of content supported (live, sport, news, entertainment, children's programming, drama, digital, factual, etc.) as well as the number of hours of live and pre-recorded subtitled content delivered annually?</p> <p>Tenderers should provide a case study and references that demonstrate delivery at broadcaster scale.</p> | 12%        |
|                                             | <p>Tenderers should provide details of the names, industry relevant or individual qualifications, language capabilities and relevant experience of key personnel that will be involved in providing the services to S4C and the role that each one of them will take in providing the services.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | 8%         |
|                                             |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |            |
| <b>Service Delivery</b>                     | <p>Tenderers should describe their proposed approach to delivering the subtitling service, including workflow, operational processes, resource allocation, governance arrangements, and how service quality will be maintained throughout the contract term.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | 4%         |

|                                                              |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |    |
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|                                                              | <p>Tenderers should explain how content will be received, processed, quality checked, and delivered back to the broadcaster, including details of key hand-off points, responsibilities, and controls.</p> <p>Tenderers should describe how they will manage fluctuations in programme volumes, seasonal peaks, schedule changes, and short-notice requests while maintaining service levels.</p> <p>Tenderers should explain their approach to latency management (with English and Welsh language subtitles), real-time editing, and operator collaboration.</p> |    |
|                                                              | Tenderers should describe how they conduct quality reviews and the frequency of such reviews. Examples of quality improvement initiatives implemented for clients should be provided.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | 2% |
|                                                              | Tenderers should explain their process for handling viewer complaints and correcting errors.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | 2% |
|                                                              | Describe your understanding of broadcaster accessibility obligations and subtitle quality requirements.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | 2% |
| <b>Proposed System Features and Technical Infrastructure</b> | Tenderers should describe their proposed delivery system features, including details of any efficiencies or workflow improvements over traditional systems.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | 7% |
|                                                              | <p>Tenderers shall explain the software and technical infrastructure behind their systems covering automation systems, and subtitle formats, licences and support system that are in place for this software.</p> <p>Tenderers should describe how backup services will be delivered for the system, giving details of backup and restore procedures.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                          | 2% |
|                                                              | Tenderers should describe the level of automation or artificial intelligence (AI) they use within their workflow, and how and when human review is applied.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | 2% |
| <b>Staff Retainment, Recruitment and</b>                     | Tenderers should provide details of their staff recruitment and training strategy by:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | 4% |

|                                                                               |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |    |
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| <b>Training</b>                                                               | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Describing their approach to recruiting suitably qualified and experienced subtitling personnel and maintaining workforce stability throughout the contract term.</li> <li>Describing how they will ensure that sufficient numbers of trained personnel are available to meet forecast and unexpected demands.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |    |
|                                                                               | Tenderers should describe how they will ensure that subtitlers have the relevant Welsh and English language skills required.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | 3% |
|                                                                               | Tenderers should explain the measures in place to retain key personnel and minimise disruption resulting from employee departures; and their succession planning arrangements for critical operational and management roles.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | 5% |
| <b>Business Continuity</b>                                                    | <p>Tenderers should describe how you they will ensure resilience and Business Continuity across the provision during the contractual term by providing a copy of its business continuity and disaster recovery (BCDR) arrangements.</p> <p>The BCDR should describe:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The contingency arrangements in place in the event of a) software, hardware or power failure; b) staff absences and/or illness; c) a major incident?</li> <li>How the Bidder ensures uninterrupted service during these events?</li> <li>The service resilience measures in place for live broadcasting?</li> </ul> <p>Tenderers should explain if they have ever experienced a major service failure and how it was managed.</p> <p>Tenderers should explain how often their BCDR arrangements are reviewed, updated and approved?</p> | 5% |
| <b>Future Developments of Technology to further Access Services provision</b> | Tenderers should describe their strategy for identifying, evaluating, and integrating new technologies into day-to-day subtitling workflows, including explaining how their approach to researching and introducing new technologies will be aligned with staff training and                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | 6% |

|            |                                                                                                   |     |
|------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|
|            | development, to ensure teams are fully equipped to adopt them in day-to-day operations.           |     |
|            | Tenderers should describe what safeguards are in place to ensure quality when automation is used. | 2%  |
|            | Tenderers should outline their roadmap for innovation over the next three years.                  | 4%  |
| <b>Fee</b> | Tenderers should provide details of the hourly fee for each of the five elements of the service.  | 30% |

## Lot 2 – S4C's Audio Description Services

| Award Criteria                              | Evaluation Questions and How will S4C evaluate the response                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | Weightings |
|---------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------|
| <b>Written Statement:</b>                   |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |            |
| <b>Company Experience and Key Personnel</b> | <p>Tenderers shall provide details of company experience in delivering a Welsh language Audio Description service including scripting and narration.</p> <p>Tenderers should describe their experience of delivering Welsh language Audio Description services for broadcasters, streaming platforms, and/or media organisations over the last five years, including experience in the following genres:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Soap operas and dramas</li> <li>• Lifestyle programming</li> <li>• Children's programming</li> <li>• Live programming</li> </ul> <p>Details should include the number of hours of Audio Description delivered annually.</p> <p>Tenderers should describe any other types of content (sport, news, entertainment, digital, etc.) they have supported, and how they approach creating, scripting and narrating an Audio Description service for these genres.</p> <p>Tenderers should provide a case study and references that demonstrate delivery at broadcaster scale.</p> | 12%        |
|                                             | <p>Tenderers should provide details of the names, industry relevant or individual qualifications, language capabilities and relevant experience of key personnel that will be involved in providing the services to S4C and the role that each one of them will take in providing the services, ensuring that the Bidder is able to offer a range of different voices to narrate the service.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | 8%         |
| <b>Service Delivery</b>                     | <p>Tenderers should describe their proposed approach to delivering the Audio Description service including how content will be received, processed, quality checked and delivered back to S4C. Tenderers should include</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | 2%         |

|                                                              |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |    |
|--------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----|
|                                                              | details of key hand-off points, responsibilities and controls.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |    |
|                                                              | <p>Tenderers should explain if they have the capacity to work within the relevant time constraints and that they have the appropriate management systems to enable them to deliver the delivery materials in accordance with the requirements.</p> <p>Tenderers should describe how they will manage fluctuations in programme volumes, seasonal peaks, schedule changes, and short-notice requests while maintaining service levels.</p> | 2% |
|                                                              | <p>Tenderers should explain their approach to ensuring the quality, accuracy and appropriateness of the Welsh language used in the Audio Description service.</p> <p>Tenderers should explain how they conduct quality reviews; the frequency of such reviews; and provide examples of quality improvement initiatives implemented for clients.</p>                                                                                       | 2% |
|                                                              | Tenderers should describe their process for handling viewer complaints and correcting errors.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | 2% |
|                                                              | <p>Describe your understanding of broadcaster accessibility obligations and Audio Description quality requirements.</p> <p>Tenderers should describe how they ensure the Audio Description meets relevant accessibility standards and industry best practice.</p>                                                                                                                                                                         | 2% |
| <b>Proposed System and Features Technical Infrastructure</b> | <p>Tenderers should describe their proposed delivery system features, including details of any efficiencies or workflow improvements over traditional systems and the technologies and methodologies used for audio description.</p> <p>Tenderers should describe the proposed Audio Description system, including its architecture, deployment model (cloud, hybrid, or on-premise), and key functional components.</p>                  | 7% |

|                                                   |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |    |
|---------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----|
|                                                   | Tenderers should describe the features available for scripting, editing, reviewing, and approving Audio Description, including support for timing, segmentation, spell checking, and style guides.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |    |
|                                                   | <p>Tenderers shall explain the software and technical infrastructure behind their systems covering the audio description platforms, software, and production tools used within the service.</p> <p>Tenderers should describe how backup services will be delivered for the system, giving details of backup and restore procedures.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | 2% |
|                                                   | Tenderers should describe the level of automation or artificial intelligence (AI) they use within their workflow, and how and when human review is applied.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | 2% |
| <b>Staff Retainment, Recruitment and Training</b> | <p>Tenderers should provide details of their staff recruitment and training strategy by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Describing their approach to recruiting suitably qualified and experienced Audio Description personnel and maintaining workforce stability throughout the contract term, including the capacity to contract a variety of individuals to narrate the service in order to offer a variety of voices.</li> <li>Describing how they ensure sufficient numbers of trained personnel are available to meet forecast and unexpected demand.</li> </ul> | 4% |
|                                                   | Tenderers should describe how they ensure that their Welsh Audio Describers have Welsh language skills of a sufficiently high standard, and what assessment or quality assurance processes do they use to verify their linguistic competence.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | 3% |
|                                                   | Tenderers should explain the measures in place to retain key personnel and minimise disruption resulting from employee departures; and their succession planning arrangements for critical operational and management roles.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | 5% |

|                                                                               |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |     |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| <b>Business Continuity</b>                                                    | <p>Tenderers should describe how you they will ensure resilience and Business Continuity across the provision during the contractual term by providing a copy of its business continuity and disaster recovery (BCDR) arrangements.</p> <p>The BCDR should describe:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The contingency arrangements in place in the event of a) software, hardware or power failure; b) staff absences and/or illness; c) a major incident?</li> <li>• How the Bidder ensures uninterrupted service during these events?</li> <li>• The service resilience measures in place for live broadcasting?</li> </ul> <p>Tenderers should explain if they have ever experienced a major service failure and how it was managed.</p> <p>Tenderers should explain how often their BCDR arrangements are reviewed, updated and approved?</p> | 5%  |
| <b>Future Developments of Technology to further Access Services provision</b> | Tenderers should describe their strategy for identifying, evaluating, and integrating new technologies into day-to-day Audio Description workflows including their approach to researching and introducing new technologies to be aligned with staff training and development, to ensure teams are fully equipped to adopt them in day-to-day operations.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | 6%  |
|                                                                               | Tenderers should provide details of their proposed approach to delivering live Audio Description throughout the contract period, including how they will set out to support the use and growth of live Audio Description.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | 2%  |
|                                                                               | Tenderers should outline their roadmap for innovation over the next three years.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | 4%  |
| <b>Fee</b>                                                                    | Tenderers should provide details of the hourly fee for the service.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | 30% |

### Lot 3 – S4C's On-Screen Signing (BSL) Services

| Award Criteria                              | Evaluation Questions and How will S4C evaluate the response                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | Weightings |
|---------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------|
| <b>Written Statement:</b>                   |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |            |
| <b>Company Experience and Key Personnel</b> | <p>Tenderers shall provide details of company experience in delivering On-Screen Signing for broadcast and on-demand content.</p> <p>Tenderers should describe their experience delivering On-Screen Signing services for broadcasters, streaming platforms, or media organisations over the last five years, including experience in the following genres:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lifestyle programming</li> <li>• Factual programming / current affairs</li> <li>• Children's programming</li> <li>• Live programming</li> </ul> <p>Tenderers should explain their approach to creating and scripting an On-Screen Signing service for these genres and how their approach varies, depending on the genre.</p> <p>Tenderers should explain if they have supported any other types of content (sport, drama, news, entertainment, digital, etc.) and explain how many hours of Audio Description they deliver annually.</p> <p>Tenderers should provide a case study and references that demonstrate delivery at broadcaster scale.</p> | 12%        |
|                                             | <p>Tenderers should provide details of the names, industry relevant or individual qualifications, language capabilities and relevant experience of key personnel that will be involved in providing the services to S4C and the role that each one of them will take in providing the services.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | 8%         |
| <b>Service Delivery</b>                     | <p>Tenderers should describe their proposed approach to delivering the On-Screen Signing service, including workflow, operational processes, resource allocation, governance arrangements, and how service quality will be maintained throughout the contract term.</p> <p>Tenderers should explain how content will be received, processed, quality checked, and delivered back to S4C,</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | 4%         |

|                                                              |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |    |
|--------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----|
|                                                              | <p>including details of key hand-off points, responsibilities, and controls.</p> <p>Tenderers should describe how they will manage fluctuations in programme volumes, seasonal peaks, schedule changes, and short-notice requests while maintaining service levels.</p>                                                                                                                                             |    |
|                                                              | <p>Tenderers should outline their approach to delivering British Sign Language that reflects Welsh linguistic and cultural context including how to account for regional variation, audience expectations in Wales, and consistency of quality across content.</p>                                                                                                                                                  | 2% |
|                                                              | <p>Tenderers should explain how they conduct quality reviews and the frequency of such reviews, including how they handle viewer complaints. Examples of quality improvement initiatives implemented for clients should be provided.</p>                                                                                                                                                                            | 2% |
|                                                              | <p>Describe your understanding of broadcaster accessibility obligations and On-Screen Signing quality requirements.</p> <p>How do you ensure the On-Screen Signing meets relevant accessibility standards and industry best practice?</p>                                                                                                                                                                           | 2% |
| <b>Proposed System Features and Technical Infrastructure</b> | <p>Tenderers should describe their proposed system features, including details of any efficiencies or workflow improvements over traditional systems and what technologies and methodologies they use for On-Screen Signing.</p> <p>Tenderers should explain their approach to preparing BSL scripts and delivering them on screen, including processes for translation, adaptation, and on-screen performance.</p> | 7% |
|                                                              | <p>Tenderers shall explain the software and technical infrastructure behind their systems covering the On-Screen Signing platforms, software, and production tools used within the service.</p> <p>Tenderers should describe how backup services will be delivered for the system, giving details of backup and restore procedures.</p>                                                                             | 2% |

|                                                   |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |    |
|---------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----|
|                                                   | Tenderers should describe the level of automation or AI they use within their workflow, and how and when human review is applied?                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | 2% |
| <b>Staff Retainment, Recruitment and Training</b> | <p>Tenderers should provide details of their staff recruitment and training strategy by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Describing their approach to recruiting suitably qualified and experienced signing personnel and maintaining workforce stability throughout the contract term.</li> <li>• Describing how they will ensure that sufficient numbers of trained personnel are available to meet forecast and unexpected demands.</li> </ul>                                                                                                 | 4% |
|                                                   | <p>Tenderers should explain their approach to training staff in regional variation within BSL, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How Welsh BSL variation is incorporated into training;</li> <li>• Use of native or regionally experienced signers; and</li> <li>• Ongoing professional development and quality monitoring.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                   | 3% |
|                                                   | Tenderers should explaining the measures in place to retain key personnel and minimise disruption resulting from employee departures; and their succession planning arrangements for critical operational and management roles.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | 5% |
| <b>Business Continuity</b>                        | <p>Tenderers should describe how you they will ensure resilience and Business Continuity across the provision during the contractual term by providing a copy of its business continuity and disaster recovery (BCDR) arrangements.</p> <p>The BCDR should describe:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The contingency arrangements in place in the event of a) software, hardware or power failure; b) staff absences and/or illness; c) a major incident?</li> <li>• How the Bidder ensures uninterrupted service during these events?</li> </ul> | 5% |

|                                                                               |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |     |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|
|                                                                               | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The service resilience measures in place for live broadcasting?</li> </ul> <p>Tenderers should explain if they have ever experienced a major service failure and how it was managed.</p> <p>Tenderers should explain how often their BCDR arrangements are reviewed, updated and approved?</p>                                                                                                                                                                                          |     |
| <b>Future Developments of Technology to further Access Services provision</b> | <p>Tenderers should describe their strategy for identifying, evaluating, and integrating new technologies into day-to-day On-Screen Signing workflows, including their approach to researching and introducing new technologies to be aligned with staff training and development, to ensure teams are fully equipped to adopt them in day-to-day operations.</p> <p>Tenderers should provide details of their proposed approach to looking at delivering live On-Screen Signing at some point during the contract period.</p> | 6%  |
|                                                                               | <p>Tenderers should describe what safeguards are in place to ensure quality if and when automation is used.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | 2%  |
|                                                                               | <p>Tenderers should outline their roadmap for innovation over the next three years.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | 4%  |
| <b>Fee</b>                                                                    | <p>Tenderers should provide details of the hourly fee for the service?</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | 30% |

Please find attached at Appendix 2 the matrix setting out how the information required at part 3.1 above will be evaluated in accordance with these criteria.

Following submission of the written tenders in accordance with this Invitation to Tender, each panel member will make an initial evaluation of the tender responses in relation to each criteria (excluding the Fee) by applying the evaluation matrix set out in Appendix 2. The panel members shall then convene to moderate and reach a consensus and agree the final score against each criteria. S4C may, but are not obliged to, appoint an independent moderator to support evaluators in reaching a consensus score.

### **Fee Evaluation**

In relation to each separate Lot, S4C will evaluate the fee(s) provided by all Tenderers using the following formula: lowest fee provided as part of the tender divided by the Tenderer's submitted fee. S4C may exclude responses that have provided abnormally low fees. The service fee for each Lot will be weighted at 30%.

### **5.3 Disqualification of Tender Responses/Tenderers**

S4C reserves the right to disqualify a tender response and/or a Tenderer from this tender process at any time if:

- (a) a tender response does not comply in any respect with the requirements of this ITT;
- (b) any information provided to S4C by the relevant Tenderer (or, in the case of a consortium, any of its members), is incomplete, inaccurate or misleading in any respect or ceases to be correct;
- (c) the Tenderer has colluded with any person (excluding, where the Tenderer is a consortium, collusion between consortium members in relation to the consortium's tender response) in relation to or in connection with its or any other Tenderer's tender response;
- (d) a Tenderer's fees appears to be abnormally low and, having been asked to explain the tender response (or the parts which S4C consider to be abnormally low), the response does not satisfactorily account for the low level of fees.

Disqualification of any tender response or Tenderer will be without prejudice to any other rights or remedies of S4C.

### **5.4 Contract Award**

Subject to the provisions of Part 6.1 below and following completion of the evaluation of tender responses, S4C will inform Tenderers of the results of the evaluation via e-mail correspondence.

Should the winning Tenderer decline to accept the contract, then it will be offered to the next ranked Tenderer, until it has been accepted.

The Tenderer whose tender response has been successful will be required to enter into an agreement with S4C in the form of the draft contract. No contract will be formed unless and until S4C executes the agreement. No oral or written acceptance of any tender or notification that a Tenderer has been successful will constitute a contract.

## **Part 6      Legal Notes**

### **6.1            No Obligation to Offer the Contract**

Nothing contained in this ITT nor any communication between S4C and a Tenderer regarding the tendering process or the tender response shall constitute a contract for the provision of any service covered by this tender process nor a warranty or a representation that any contract will or may be awarded.

S4C reserves the right to withdraw from and/or abandon and/or defer this tender process at any time, not to award any contract as a result of this tender process, to supplement, revise and/or clarify the terms and conditions of this ITT and/or to require Tenderers to clarify their tender responses and/or to provide additional information in relation thereto.

### **6.2            Conflict of Interest**

Tenderers are required to provide details if it is envisaged that there may be a conflict of interest between individuals involved in the application and S4C staff, this is to enable S4C to ensure that it assigns staff to the tender process that have no personal relationship with any Tenderer or consortium member of relevant staff.

### **6.3            Draft Contract**

The draft contract for the provision of the Access Services is set out in Appendix 1.

Any comments on the draft contract must be included in a tender response as set out in Part 3.1. Otherwise, by submitting a tender response Tenderers are deemed to have accepted the terms and conditions of the draft contract.

Notification of comments on the contract in a tender response does not mean that they are agreed by S4C. S4C reserves the right to amend the draft contract after publication once the details of the winning bid are known to conform with the deal specific terms agreed with the successful applicant. If following the award of the tender, the contract is not finalised satisfactorily S4C reserves the right to award the tender to an alternative Tenderer or to re-tender the contract.

### **6.4            Codes of Practice and Guidelines**

The successful Tenderer will be required to comply with the following codes of practice, legislation and guidelines (amongst others):

- Health and Safety Legislation;
- S4C Technical Requirements;
- S4C Data Protection and Privacy Policies;
- S4C Statement of Commitment to Diversity;
- Ofcom's Broadcasting Code;
- S4C Welsh Language Guidelines;
- Supplier Statement: Sexual Harassment;
- Guidelines on the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI);
- Guidance on how to submit subtitles and other access services to S4C.

Each Tenderer should include the cost of complying with the above (including to cost of appropriate advice) within the application. Many of these guidelines are available on the S4C Production Website which is available at <http://www.s4c.cymru/en/production/page/1154/guidelines/>

## **6.5 Freedom of Information**

S4C is subject to the provisions of the Freedom of Information ("FOI") Act 2000. If any Tenderer considers that any information supplied by it to S4C pursuant to this invitation is commercially sensitive or confidential in nature, this should be highlighted explicitly and the reasons for its sensitivity set out in full in the tender response. Please note, however, that identifying information as confidential or commercially sensitive does not guarantee that it will be exempt from disclosure. S4C retains the discretion to decide whether or not particular information is exempt from disclosure.

## **6.6 Data Protection**

By submitting a tender response, Tenderers confirm that they have informed all individuals identified in the tender submission that they will share their personal data in this way. Tenderers acknowledge that S4C will process all personal data provided as part of the tender response in accordance with applicable data protection legislation (including the General Data Protection Regulation 2016 and the Data Protection Act 2018). The S4C Privacy Notice is available on [www.s4c.cymru](http://www.s4c.cymru) and Tenderers hereby confirm that they will notify all individuals whose personal data is provided to S4C of this clause 6.6. S4C will process any personal data provided in tender responses on the basis that it is in the Tenderer's and S4C's legitimate interests to process all personal data provided as part of the tender response for the purpose of evaluating the tender response.

## **6.7 Confidentiality and Publicity**

By submitting a response to this tender, Tenderers agree to keep confidential any information which is disclosed or otherwise made available to them by S4C in any medium whatsoever during or in connection with this tender process. Tenderers shall not use such information for any purpose other than the preparation of the tender response and shall not disclose such information to any person other than in confidence and on a need to know basis to those persons who are directly involved in the preparation of the tender response. Such obligations of confidentiality shall not apply to documents already in the public domain at the time it is disclosed or made available to them by S4C.

By submitting a response to this tender Tenderers agree not to, and agree to ensure that their employees do not, issue any publicity of any kind (including but not limited to notices via social networking sites such as Facebook or X or otherwise) regarding the subject of this tender or any decision of S4C in relation to any element of this tender unless S4C has provided prior written consent to such communication.

## **6.8 Disclaimer**

S4C gives no warranty or representation regarding the completeness or accuracy of any information contained in this ITT and any reliance placed on any such information by you is at your own risk.

## **6.9 Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations 2006 ("TUPE") Implications**

It should be noted that the Access Services are currently being provided to S4C by three providers under contract with S4C. Where a business activity is re-tendered, such a transfer may constitute a "transfer of undertaking" or a "service provision change" for the purposes of the Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations 2006 ("TUPE"). In broad terms, TUPE provides that where there is a transfer of an undertaking and/or a "service provision change" the successful Tenderer(s) takes over any employment liabilities and the responsibility for the employment contracts of the employees of the current providers who are primarily assigned to the S4C contract. The successful provider must offer those transferring employees the same terms and conditions of service and continued employment with the new provider. S4C does not expect any of S4C's own employees to be the subject of any TUPE transfer. The application of TUPE will always be a matter of law and the Tenderers will need to consider and take their own advice on the possible application of TUPE. As S4C is not a party to any TUPE transfer, this will be a matter to be resolved between the outgoing contractors and the successful applicant(s).

S4C understands from the existing contractors that it is possible that around 21 employees may be affected by any TUPE transfer (19 in relation to S4C's Subtitling Service and 2 in relation to S4C's Audio Description Service). More detailed TUPE information in relation to specific Lots will (to the extent to which it is available to S4C) be made available on request to Tenderers following signature of a Non-Disclosure Agreement.

Each Tenderer will need to consider the possible TUPE implications as part of the fee offered.

## **6.10 Tender Costs**

Each Tenderer shall be responsible for its own costs and expenses incurred in connection with this tender process. S4C will not under any circumstances contribute towards any such costs and expenses.

## **6.11 Amendments to Tender Documents**

S4C reserves the right to make changes to the tender at any time. To allow time for such amendment to be taken into account S4C may, at its discretion, extend the dates set out in Part 4.1 above.

## **6.12 Copyright**

S4C owns the copyright in the ITT and any other materials issued or made available by S4C. Tenderers are not permitted to copy, reproduce, use or issue copies of the ITT or such materials (or any part thereof) other than as and to the extent strictly required for the preparation and submission of their tender responses.

## **6.13 Non-Collusion**

By submitting a response to this ITT, each Tenderer certifies that:

1. the tender response is bona fide and intended to be competitive;

2. the Tenderer has not fixed or adjusted the response by or under or in accordance with any agreement or arrangement with any other person (other than, in the case of a consortium, the other consortium members) or required any other Tenderer to do the same; and
3. the Tenderer has not communicated to any person other than S4C the amount or approximate budget or price of the tender response, except where the disclosure, in confidence, was necessary to obtain insurance premium or other quotations required for the preparation of the tender.

#### **6.14 Inappropriate Conduct**

If a Tenderer or an appointed advisor to a Tenderer makes any attempt to inappropriately influence this tender process or the award of the contract in any way, S4C may disqualify that Tenderer's tender response in S4C's absolute discretion. Any direct or indirect canvassing by a Tenderer or an appointed advisor to a Tenderer in relation to this procurement or any attempt to obtain information from any of the employees or agents of S4C concerning another tendering organisation may result in disqualification at S4C's sole discretion.

#### **6.15 Governing Law**

This ITT shall be governed by the laws of England and Wales and each Tenderer agrees, by returning a tender response, to submit to the exclusive jurisdiction of the courts of England and Wales.

**APPENDIX 1**

**DRAFT CONTRACT**

**SUBJECT TO CONTRACT**

(See attached document)

## APPENDIX 2

### TENDER EVALUATION MATRIX

| Score | Category                 | Profile                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
|-------|--------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 0     | Zero Response/ Very poor | Failure to address S4C's requirements or no evidence has been provided to address S4C's requirements.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| 1     | Poor                     | A poor proposal in terms of addressing S4C's requirements or supported by poor evidence that such proposals will be delivered, which has major gaps, and is not convincing in many respects or seriously lacks credibility.                                                                                                                  |
| 2     | Below satisfactory       | A proposal that is below satisfactory in terms of addressing S4C's requirements, or supported by below satisfactory evidence, which has moderate gaps or is unconvincing or irrelevant.                                                                                                                                                      |
| 3     | Satisfactory             | A satisfactory proposal in terms of addressing S4C's requirements or supported by satisfactory evidence that such proposals will be delivered, but which has minor gaps or which to a small extent is unconvincing or lacks credibility.                                                                                                     |
| 4     | Good                     | A good proposal to address S4C's requirements supported by good evidence that such proposals will be delivered that is sufficient (in qualitative terms), convincing and credible.                                                                                                                                                           |
| 5     | Excellent                | An excellent proposal which addresses and exceeds S4C's requirements in a way that S4C considers offers deliverable and cost-effective additional functionality, services or standards (as applicable) and which is supported by excellent evidence that such proposals will be delivered which is consistent, comprehensive and compelling. |

## **APPENDIX 3**

### **FURTHER DESCRIPTIONS OF THE SERVICES**

#### **Lot 1 – S4C’s Subtitling Service**

##### **Background Information**

In accordance with the statutory requirements of the Communications Act 2003 and Ofcom’s Code on Television Access Services (<https://www.ofcom.org.uk/siteassets/resources/documents/tv-radio-and-on-demand/broadcast-codes/other-codes/ofcom-code-television-access-services.pdf?v=324377>) S4C must provide a subtitling service, as part of the supplementary services on S4C.

S4C provides English & Welsh subtitling for selected programmes that are broadcast across linear and digital platforms. These subtitles will be available across all S4C platforms including social media clips and digital services. Some programmes will require BIST (burnt-in subtitles). In 2025, S4C provided English subtitles on nearly 85% of its linear content and Welsh subtitles on 70% of its linear content. The figures for digital content are similar.

The successful Tenderer will offer a comprehensive service for the supply of all of the following:

- English Subtitles
- English Subtitles for live programmes
- Welsh Subtitles
- Welsh Subtitles for live programmes
- Burnt In Subtitles (BIST)

The English subtitling service is aimed primarily at non-Welsh speaking viewers; learners, deaf and hard of hearing viewers.

The Welsh subtitling service is aimed at more advanced learners as well as deaf and hard of hearing Welsh viewers.

##### **Content to be subtitled**

This Lot covers the provision of English and Welsh subtitling for a mix of pre-recorded and live programmes.

A number of programmes are transmitted live and S4C requires live subtitles on some of those programmes e.g. live Welsh subtitles on daily (Monday – Friday) magazine programmes Heno and Prynhawn Da as well as the nightly news programme, Newyddion (Monday-Friday). The English subtitles for these series are produced by third party providers outside the scope of this contract.

Live English subtitles will be required for other live programmes such as live coverage from various events e.g. Royal Welsh Show / Eisteddfod Yr Urdd / as well as live current affairs programmes and sporting events.

Subtitles from live programmes are captured via a pre-provided software and used on programmes that are repeated or that are available on VoD platforms. This Lot will also require the successful Tenderer to be responsible for:

- Repurposing the subtitle files that are captured during live programmes and prepare new files for the repeats / VoD requirements.
- Capture files provided by third party subtitle providers e.g. BBC Wales / Tinopolis for the same purpose as above.

### All Subtitling Services

The ability to offer a flexible service based around delivery timescale is essential and therefore successful Tenderers are expected to work closely with S4C and third-party subtitle providers to ensure the subtitles are prepared within pre-determined & agreed timescales.

Tenderers are expected to have a clear understanding of the nature of the service. The successful Tenderer must have expertise and full understanding of the audience requirements.

S4C's programmes are provided by various production companies, and the channel broadcasts all kinds of programmes within different genres. The subtitles must reflect the nature of the programme and should not omit what is being said on-screen.

The English subtitling service currently excludes programmes produced by the BBC and some of S4C's current magazine live output e.g. Prynhawn Da & Heno.

English subtitles for the individual programmes of Pobol y Cwm are provided by BBC Wales (usually three episodes a week) – but the successful Tenderer will need to compile these for the weekly omnibus transmission.

There will also be requirements to subtitle both new and archive content in advance where they will be published as a boxset drop ahead of set TX dates.

The service is expected to be of the highest quality with 100% accuracy of subtitles, spelling and grammar (pre-recorded) and near perfect accuracy for live subtitling. The subtitles will be required to convey the tone and nature of the programme and its genre. Pre-recorded subtitles should be accurately timed.

### **1. Number of Hours to be Subtitled**

It is anticipated that an average of 13 hours per week of pre-recorded content will need to be subtitled in English each week, and an average of 14 hours per week of pre-recorded content will need Welsh language subtitles. An average of 10 hours a week of live content will need live Welsh subtitles and around 250 hours a year of live content will need live English subtitles. The live English subtitles weekly figure varies greatly depending on live events. For example, a quiet week in October may only require 4 hours of live subtitling, but the Eisteddfod yr Urdd week in May / June will require around 63 hours of live English subtitling.

It's important to note that the number of hours of programmes that need English and Welsh subtitles in each week may vary by +/- 50%.

## **2. Requirements of the Service**

### **2.1 Staffing the Service**

Applications are invited from Tenderers who are capable of providing the entire service set out in Lot 1.

Tenderers should have a sufficient number of staff with relevant experience of providing high quality English and Welsh language pre-recorded and live subtitles. They must have excellent language skills, an understanding of the broadcasting industry and a broad knowledge of the needs of the audience. Tenderers are expected to have appropriate management systems in place that will ensure seamless subtitles of consistently high standard and also systems in place to ensure monitoring and evaluation of their work.

Tenderers should also consider training provisions across the required services, ensuring continued development for staff in line with new technology, as well as investing in resources to train new staff across the timeline of the contract to ensure a continued supply of talent within this field.

### **2.2 Preparation and Viewing**

S4C will organise MPEG copies (or equivalent) for the successful Tenderer and will arrange for them to be sent via a delivery portal such as Signiant Media Shuttle. In some cases, MPEG copies of programmes and scripts will be provided directly by the production company.

The successful Tenderer will need to ensure that they have appropriate and effective equipment to create the subtitles and that they have robust and reliable internet access, with full technical support to receive the programmes and deliver the subtitles in accordance with S4C's delivery requirements during the term of the contract.

### **2.3 Delivery of Subtitles Files**

Delivery of subtitles will be scheduled in line with the delivery of completed programmes to S4C.

The successful Tenderer will have a flexible approach to delivering within the guidelines and the contract manager will communicate S4C's requirements.

In some circumstances programmes may be delivered late by S4C and/or the producer and the successful Tenderer will be required to prioritise a quick turnaround for those programmes and to work within the delivery timescales. The tender response should specify how the Tenderer will work flexibly to respond to late delivery timescales.

All subtitle files should be delivered via S4C's Signiant delivery gateway, unless agreed otherwise with S4C's Access Services Lead in advance of delivery.

### **2.4 BIST**

In some pre-determined instances, the successful Tenderer will need to adapt an original subtitling file for BIST creation (Burnt in Subtitles). The file would be required for TX as well as for special screenings & festivals. Currently S4C's soap opera, *Pobol y Cwm* is shown as an omnibus with BIST on Sundays & the successful Tenderer will be expected

to compile and prepare the subtitles and BIST version through working closely with BBC Wales to ensure accuracy.

Current volumes for BIST are estimated at an average 2.5 hours a week.

## **2.5 Loading of Subtitle Files**

The successful Tenderer will be required to upload all subtitle files via a delivery portal using Signiant Media Shuttle and load the files to the relevant programmes on the Broadcast Management System (BMS). The successful Tenderer will be expected to ensure that all files have been loaded on to this system on or before dates specified by S4C.

## **2.6 Archiving**

Each subtitle file prepared for S4C should be saved in an electronic archive and linked to an in-house database (within S4C's BMS). The successful Tenderer will be required to assist in the management and archiving of each subtitled file to be broadcast on S4C.

The successful Tenderer is required to store a master subtitle archive, as well as detailing how / where they would store a backup version of the archive.

## **2.7 Equipment & accommodation**

### Live Subtitling

The successful Tenderer will need to supply the live subtitling from Central Square using desk space, equipment and software supplied by S4C at Central Square. The specification of the equipment and software at Central Square will be selected by S4C and the cost of any new equipment and software will be borne by S4C.

S4C will provide the Wincaps software required for machines located at BBC Central Square used during live subtitling requirements.

## **3. Communication**

S4C provides access to their BMS which has details of the future schedule of work to enable the successful Tenderer to plan and resource the service effectively. The successful Tenderer will be supplied with BBC laptops in order to be able to access the BMS. The BMS will include programme titles, details of the programmes and anticipated delivery dates. S4C will also keep in daily contact with the successful Tenderer to inform them of any changes or additions to the schedule. S4C will also notify the successful Tenderer if a programme is to be BISTed.

The successful Tenderer will be required to meet with S4C quarterly to review the work, implement improvements (if necessary) and plan ahead when discussing schedules for the period to follow.

The successful Tenderer will offer practical ways to monitor the effectiveness of the service operationally, technically and creatively.

#### **4. A Service of the Highest Standard**

The service is expected to be of the highest quality with 100% accuracy of subtitles, spelling and grammar. The subtitles will be required to convey the tone and nature of the programme and its genre. Subtitles should be accurately timed.

The language will need to vary from being spoken language / simple language / formal language, depending on the nature of the programmes. Simple sound references should be added when needed.

## **Lot 2 – S4C's Audio Description Service**

### **Background Information**

In accordance with the statutory requirements of the Communications Act 2003 and Ofcom's Code on Television Access Services (<https://www.ofcom.org.uk/siteassets/resources/documents/tv-radio-and-on-demand/broadcast-codes/other-codes/ofcom-code-television-access-services.pdf?v=324377>) S4C must provide an Audio Description service for the blind and partially sighted, as part of the supplementary services on S4C.

Audio description is oral commentary that fills the periods in programmes when there is no dialogue. It enables visually impaired viewers to follow the programme without having to rely on the assistance of a sighted person to explain the plot.

The commentary includes descriptions of action sequences, body language, costumes and scenes.

Ofcom is responsible for monitoring the Audio Description service targets. Ofcom's current target is 10% of all broadcasts on S4C.

S4C broadcasts over 115 hours of Welsh language programmes every week and this includes original programming, repeats and streaming.

### **1. The Programmes**

#### **1.1 Programme Selection**

S4C will select the Welsh language programmes to be audio described.

Some programmes will be more suitable for audio description than others. Some are unsuitable because there is too much continuous dialogue in the programmes.

Some programmes are selected because they are particularly suitable for the blind and partially sighted and S4C will ensure that a wide range of entertaining programmes is selected.

S4C does not currently provide audio description for live programmes but requires the Tenderer to include plans of how this can be achieved within the first 12 months of the contract, with annual increases to the amount of live programmes that are audio described across the term of the contract.

#### **1.2 Number of Programmes**

The number of programmes the successful Tenderer will be required to provide under this contract is likely to vary depending on the number of repeats broadcast on S4C.

S4C aims to achieve the target to audio-describe 10% of all programmes broadcast by S4C and has ambitions to increase this percentage year on year.

It is estimated that around 20 hours (time slots) of new programmes will require audio description every month but S4C cannot guarantee the number of hours. Tenderers should note that the amount of work can vary throughout the year, with the summer being fairly quiet and the Christmas period busier. The length of content slots are

available here on the S4C production website:  
<https://www.s4c.cymru/en/production/page/guidelines>

## **2. Material and Delivery**

### **2.1 Delivery of Copies of Programmes by S4C**

S4C will organise MP4 copies (or equivalent) with burnt-in timecode for the successful Tenderer and will arrange for them to be sent via a delivery portal such as Signiant Media Shuttle.

The successful Tenderer will need to ensure that they have appropriate and effective equipment to create the WAV files and that they have robust and reliable internet access, with full technical support to receive the programmes and deliver the audio description in accordance with S4C's delivery requirements during the term of the contract.

S4C will liaise monthly with a list of programme delivery dates, and when the work needs to be returned for broadcast.

### **2.2 Delivery of the Audio Description Soundtrack by the Successful Tenderer**

The successful Tenderer is expected to deliver the finished audio file in good time, before the broadcasting date.

The successful Tenderer will have a flexible approach to delivering within the guidelines and the contract manager will communicate S4C's requirements.

In some circumstances programmes may be delivered late by S4C and/or the producer and the successful Tenderer will be required to prioritise a quick turnaround for those programmes and to work within the delivery timescales. The tender response should specify how the Tenderer will work flexibly to respond to late delivery timescales.

All WAV files should be delivered via a platform such as S4C's Signiant delivery gateway, unless agreed otherwise with S4C's Access Services Lead in advance of delivery.

The successful Tenderer will need to ensure that the delivery complies with S4C technical guidelines, ensuring –

Finished audio file is in WAV format, with two tracks only;

That the audio file is encoded as PCM, with a sample rate of 48kHz, and at a depth of 24 bits per sample;

Track 1 should contain audio description, at a normal speech level (mixed to comply with EBU R128). The track should aim to meet the expected target loudness of non-live programmes, which is -23.0 LUFS (plus/minus 0.5LU), with a maximum recommended True Peak level of -3dBTP.

Track 2 should contain the Pan & Fade control signal (at a level of -12dB, relative to the Digital Audio Reference level at -18 dBFS).

Full technical guidance on delivering programmes to S4C can be found here on the S4C production website: <https://www.s4c.cymru/en/production/page/guidelines>

Please note, S4C currently does not accept delivered programmes with audio description embedded, unless agreed with S4C's Access Services Lead.

All finished audio files should be delivered via S4C's Signiant delivery gateway, unless agreed otherwise with S4C's Access Services Lead in advance of delivery.

### **3. Staffing the Service**

The key requirements of the audio description service is to prepare, script, narrate and produce a soundtrack. The successful Tenderer must be able to fulfil all the key requirements of the service.

S4C expects one person to narrate the soundtrack for the entire programme. The person describing should be suitable for the type of programme and continuity within a series would be expected. S4C expects the successful Tenderer to be able to offer a variety of voices to provide the entire service.

S4C expects the successful Tenderer to be able to demonstrate that core individuals of the service have experience of radio, dubbing or narrating work. It is essential that the language used in the script and narration is of the highest possible standard.

### **4. Communication**

S4C will provide the successful Tenderer with a monthly list of those programmes S4C wishes to be Audio Described several weeks in advance. S4C may from time to time vary the list of programmes to be audio described as a result of changes that can occur to the schedule and changes to the content delivery timetable. In these instances, S4C will notify the successful Tenderer by email or by telephone as soon as possible.

## **Lot 3 – S4C's On-Screen Signing (BSL) Service**

### **Background Information**

In accordance with the statutory requirements of the Communications Act, 2003 and Ofcom's Code on Television Access Services (<https://www.ofcom.org.uk/siteassets/resources/documents/tv-radio-and-on-demand/broadcast-codes/other-codes/ofcom-code-television-access-services.pdf?v=324377>) S4C must provide a signing service for the deaf or hard of hearing, as part of the supplementary services on S4C.

The majority of deaf viewers are unable to follow the dialogue and sounds essential to understand and enjoy the programme. The needs of deaf and hard of hearing people vary from sign language (BSL) to subtitles or clear sound.

Some deaf viewers find it difficult to fully understand the information being presented as subtitles and so benefit greatly from sign language.

### **1. The Programmes**

#### **1.1 Programme Selection**

S4C will select the Welsh language programmes to be signed.

Currently, S4C has signing time slots on Saturdays and repeats at midday during the week. S4C will ensure that a wide variety of entertaining programmes is selected. There is also a dedicated Signed section on S4C Clic.

S4C does not currently offer the signing service on programmes arriving very close to the broadcasting date nor live programmes but any comments on how this might be achieved would be useful.

#### **1.2 Number of Programmes**

The number of programmes the successful Tenderer will be required to provide under this contract is likely to vary depending on the length of the signing time slots. A number of factors can affect the length of the time slots – from live events such as eisteddfodau and shows to rugby and football games. It also depends on the pattern of repeat broadcasts on S4C.

S4C aims to achieve the target of providing on-screen signing of 5% of all programmes broadcast by S4C.

It is estimated that there will be between 35-45 hours (slot length) to be signed during the first quarter of the contract and between 20-35 hours (slot length) during the second quarter. Please note that actual programme lengths can be found here on the S4C production website: <https://www.s4c.cymru/en/production/page/guidelines>

Information cannot be provided on the number of hours to be signed for the remainder of the contract beyond the open signing target of 5% for all programmes broadcast by S4C.

## **2. Material and Supply**

### **2.1 Delivery of Copies of Programmes by S4C**

S4C will provide the successful Tenderer with MXF files of the programmes to be signed via a delivery portal service such as Signiant Media Shuttle as well as sending a subtitles file in .stl format by email. S4C can also send an mpeg file of the programmes if necessary.

The successful Tenderer will need to ensure that they have appropriate and effective equipment to create the On-screen signed versions and that they have robust and reliable internet access, with full technical support to receive the programmes and deliver the On-screen signed versions in accordance with S4C's delivery requirements during the term of the contract.

Delivery material may change during the contract period.

Programmes are usually available to the successful contractor 4-7 days before TX. Some programmes will be available sooner.

### **2.2 Delivery of the Signed Content**

The successful Tenderer will have a flexible approach to delivering within the guidelines and the contract manager will communicate S4C's requirements.

The successful Tenderer will be expected to deliver the finished AS-11 files two days before the broadcasting date.

The signed file is expected to comply with S4C technical guidelines which can be found here on the S4C production website:

<https://www.s4c.cymru/en/production/page/guidelines>

The translator's image should appear on the right-hand side of the screen and should not occupy more than one sixth of the screen.

The translator should use suitable techniques to highlight who is talking and draw attention to significant sound effects.

The AS-11 metadata in the signed file should reflect the 'Signing' field as Yes, and select BSL in the language field.

All signed files should be delivered via a delivery portal such as Signiant Media Shuttle, unless agreed otherwise with S4C's Access Services Lead in advance of delivery.

## **3. Staffing the Service**

The key requirements of the signing service are to prepare, script, narrate and produce a copy of the programme containing on-screen signing.

The translators' understanding of sign language should meet the Qualified Interpreter Registration Standards as set out by Signature ([signature.org.uk](http://signature.org.uk)).

It is very important that signers are aware of and use regional Welsh signs as the programmes they will be signing will be of a Welsh nature and also because the majority of the service users will be Welsh.

#### **4. Communication**

S4C will provide the successful Tenderer with a monthly list of the programmes S4C wishes to be signed several weeks in advance.

S4C may from time to time vary this monthly list as a result of changes that can occur to the schedule and changes to the content delivery timetable. In these instances, S4C will notify the successful Tenderer by email or by telephone as soon as possible.

## **APPENDIX 4**

### **BASIC INFORMATION FORM**

(See document attached)