



Controlling priority invasive non-native riparian plants and restoring native biodiversity (CIRB)

Document 1

Guidance for contractors

This document provides support for contractors to enable them to complete the tendering process in the required format. Please read this document prior to completing any tender submissions.

Questions relating to any part of the tender documents or process should be directed to ART's project management team by email at info@ayrshireriverstrust.org. All questions and answers will be circulated to all those expressing an interest in the tendering process. No questions will be answered on a 'one to one' basis (e.g. face to face or by telephone) except during the public pre tender meeting on the **6th March 2013 at 2pm**, at ART's offices. This is to ensure transparent and fair competition.

Introduction

Ayrshire Rivers Trust (ART) in conjunction with Scottish, Northern and Southern Irish Partners has secured funding to allow the control of priority invasive non-native riparian plants and the restoration of native biodiversity (CIRB). The project is part-financed by the European Union's INTERREG IVA programme, The Scottish Environment Protection Agency's restoration fund and South, East and North Ayrshire Councils through various local funds. ART's component of the CIRB project will deliver the strategic and systematic control of invasive non native species (INNS) (plants) where they occur along riparian margins in Ayrshire. Commencing in 2011 and ending in 2014, this control will immediately halt the spread of these plants and thereafter quickly reduce their potential to spread to other areas.

The target species include Giant Hogweed (*Heracleum mantegazzianum*), Japanese Knotweed (*Fallopia japonica*) and Himalayan Balsam (*Impatiens glandulifera*) herein referred to as GHW, JK and HB respectively. All 3 species occur widely throughout Ayrshire and the UK. Rivers act as a transport mechanism for these plants distributing seed (GHW & HB) and vegetative material (JK) from which the plants reproduce. These plants are categorised as highly invasive, able to rapidly out compete native species and thus reduce biodiversity. Their potential to dominate riparian margins requires that any effort to control or eradicate these species should follow a planned and systematic approach. Since 2007, ART has been at the forefront of strategic INNS control in Ayrshire. Their expertise is recognised by all three Ayrshire Councils and riparian owners across these districts. This project will

deliver environmental benefits while supporting strategic cross-border co-operation for a more prosperous region and improve access to services to enhance the quality of life.

To deliver the planned control, ART will engage suitably qualified contractors through an annual competitive tendering process in accordance with INTEREG IVA procurement requirements ensuring transparent and fair competition with the aim of achieving value for money.

This document details ART's requirements from contractors and provides necessary guidance for those intending to compete in the tendering process. ART seek a minimum of 5 contractors to submit prices for each tender but any suitably qualified contractor may request to be included in this process and may also submit quotations.

1. Tenders

Tenders from suitably qualified contractors are sought for the control of invasive non native plant species in the following target areas:

1. Control of Giant Hogweed: The River Garnock Catchment
2. Control of Giant Hogweed: The Lower River Irvine Catchment
3. Control of Giant Hogweed: The Annick Water Catchment
4. Control of Giant Hogweed: The Water of Coyle Catchment
5. Control of Giant Hogweed: The Lower River Ayr Catchment
6. Control of Giant Hogweed: The Upper River Ayr Catchment
7. Control of Giant Hogweed: The Coastal Burns
8. Control of Japanese Knotweed: The River Irvine Catchment
9. Control of Japanese Knotweed: The Upper River Girvan Catchment
10. Control of Japanese Knotweed: The River Ayr Catchment
11. Control of Japanese Knotweed: The River Garnock Catchment
12. Control of Japanese Knotweed: The Pow Burn Catchment

Maps/image files detailing individual areas are included in the relevant tender document.

Contractors may complete as many or few tender documents as they wish and a separate proposal must be submitted for each individual tender that that the contractor wishes to apply for.

The aim of the control is to immediately halt the spread and reduce the risk of further outbreaks of these plants within close proximity to the named watercourses. Close proximity includes flood plains, riparian woodlands, agricultural land and riverbanks. Most of the target species occur within 50mtrs of the water's edge, however there are areas where the target species occurs beyond 50m from the riverbank and ART has included the treatment of some such areas within the project. Control areas are identified on the maps/ image files supplied with the appropriate tender documents. Target notes are included for guidance. It is recommended that contractors familiarise themselves with these areas before submitting tenders.

2. Methods of Control

ART stipulates the method of control that is required within each individual tender document. There are no choices available to contractors as each tender includes a prescribed methodology and any deviation from this will be unacceptable. This will allow ART to monitor and compare the efficacy of the techniques used and will assist in developing protocols for the control of INNS in future.

Only two methods of control are prescribed by ART for controlling INNS within the target areas. These are:

either application of herbicide by stem injection method **or** application of herbicide by foliar spraying using knapsack all in accordance with The Code of Practice for Using Plant Protection Products in Scotland (CPPPPS) and manufacturers product label.

3. Chemicals

ART require that contractors provide quotes for the application of *Roundup Pro Biactive (450 g/l)*. Roundup Pro Biactive is the only acceptable herbicide for use within ART's delivery of the CIRB project. This ensures consistency and allows comparison of results between sites.

(Glyphosate based alternatives to Roundup Pro Biactive are unacceptable to ART, the use of which would constitute a breach of the SEARS Licence and ART's contract requirements).

Contractors are required to supply their own chemical.

4. SEARS Licenses

ART will apply for **SEARS** licenses for all tenders and ensure that they are in place prior to commencement of contracts.

ART requires contractors to supply legible copies of PA6AW certificates for all staff that will be involved with the application of herbicides. Production of certificates/proof of competence will be required prior to ART awarding contracts.

The use of sub-contractors to deliver invasive weeds control on any water course detailed in the tender documents is expressly forbidden.

On completion of the tendering procedures, ART will apply to SEPA for the necessary SEARS Licences without delay to ensure that successful contractors may proceed with contract delivery in the prescribed timeframe.

ART will collect accurate spraying records from contractors on a weekly basis and keep them on file as required by SEARS and the CPPPPS. ART will provide a simple pro forma for this purpose to standardise the way in which data is collated.

5. Timescales and Timing

ART has estimated the number of man days required to complete the control within each of the tender areas detailed in section 1 above. A man day is based on 8 working hours from the time that contractors arrive on site to the time they leave. Contractors will be required to ensure that their staff work diligently and offer value for money.

The estimated man days required for each contract is a maximum and may exceed the actual amount of days required to complete the control. ART will only pay for the actual days required to complete the works. It is therefore essential that contractors maintain contact with ART throughout the control process and keep timesheets and accurate records of progress. ART will provide a pro forma for this purpose. Satisfactory contractor performance is a pre-selection requirement and may be used in future years.

ART has also stipulated the timeframe within which control must be undertaken. Contractors should aim to deliver within the prescribed periods detailed within the tender. Contractors should ensure that their ability to deliver is not compromised by any other workload that they may have. Weather is the only acceptable external factor that may limit the contractor's ability to deliver the contract on time.

6. Responsibilities

6.1 Training

All contractors' staff involved in delivering INNS control must be trained to **NPTC PA6AW** standards.

N.B. NPTCPA6 certification is an inadequate qualification for the application of Plant Protection Products in the water environment. **The use of untrained or inadequately trained staff is not acceptable to ART** as this fails to meet best practice guidelines within the Industry. More details on training requirements can be found in Chapter II, Article 5, sections 1 & 2 of EU Directive 2009/128/EC (Published 21/10/2009).

Production of the appropriate certificates will be necessary to allow ART to apply for SEARS licences in advance of the contract execution. The ability to demonstrate the minimum certification requirements as stipulated in the CPPPPS is a tender pre-selection criterion and only those able to meet these requirements will progress to the scoring round as detailed in section 7 of this document.

Contractors will be responsible to ensure that the CPPPPS is adhered to and that the water environment is protected at all times.

The use of sub-contractors to deliver invasive weeds control on any watercourse detailed in the tender documents is expressly forbidden regardless of their qualifications.

6.2 Insurance

Contractors are required to have both Public and Employers liability insurance to satisfy the pre-selection criteria and complete environmental and health and safety risk assessments as part of the specification of services. Contractors are required to maintain their insurances for the duration of the contract.

6.3 Methodology

Contractors will be required to submit a detailed method statement for the works as part of the tender process. This will be assessed and scored in the decision making process.

6.4 Risk Assessment

Contractors should also submit a detailed risk assessment for the proposed works along with their tender submission. This will be assessed and scored in the decision making process.

It is important to remind contractors that they must also complete an environmental risk assessment prior to commencing spraying and this should be undertaken daily (in accordance with CPPPPS requirements) and it is also advisable to complete dynamic health and safety risk assessments throughout the contract delivery. Health and safety and environmental protection are of prime importance to ART and this project.

6.5 Record Keeping

ART will obtain the necessary **SEARS** licences and landowner permissions. These are kept on file with ART. The contractor will be required to keep accurate records of the quantity of chemical applied to individual landowners' property and provide ART with copies of these on completion, all in accordance with the CPPPPS and SEARS licence requirements. ART will provide a pro forma template that contractors should use to record their daily hours, location and quantity of chemical applied.

6.6 Public Health and Biodiversity

It remains the contractor's responsibility to ensure that public health and biodiversity are protected at all times. This should be achieved by minimising the risk (through relevant risk assessments) and / or ensuring the use of pesticides is minimised/prohibited in specific areas. (eg Public Parks, gardens or Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)).

In highly accessible areas such as Public Parks, the contractor will provide signage warning the public that spraying is in progress and will ensure that these signs are displayed in prominent locations until the control effort in an area is complete.

6.7 Performance

ART will monitor the effectiveness of control effort to allow reporting in line with INTERREG IVA requirements. Where the control is classed as ineffective due to operator error (e.g. using an inadequate concentration of chemical), ART will require the contractor to repeat the application of pesticide at their own cost before releasing payment. (*Roundup Pro Biactive* when applied at the manufacturers recommended rate in suitable weather conditions is highly effective).

Should unacceptably large areas be missed, again ART will require the contractor to revisit and treat the area at their own expense before releasing payment. It is therefore in the contractors' interest to ensure that their employees are conscientious and systematic in their approach to work.

7. Tender Procedures

In accordance with INTERREG procurement requirements, ART will accept tender submissions from suitably qualified contractors. Contractors are required to supply quotations for the chemical control of INNS in the riparian zones of the control areas using Roundup Pro Biactive in accordance with the manufacturers' guidelines and the Code of Practice for using

Plant Protection Products in Scotland (CPPPS). Knowledge and an understanding of the target invasive non native species and their control is essential.

Collusion between contractors is not permissible and would exclude them from this and any future opportunity to tender for this project.

Pre Selection Criteria

Only tenders that satisfy the following pre-selection criteria will progress to scoring:

- (1) Qualifications of team: Those employed in the management and control of invasive weeds will be required to produce documentation confirming their PA6AW certification.
- (2) Inclusion of the companies Health and Safety Policy.
- (3) Evidence of current Liability Insurances.
- (4) The company/business must be able to demonstrate successful delivery of control of the target species . Species specific validation of past performance in the application of plant protection products is required and contractors should include supporting evidence at the time of submission e.g. referees and references.

Scoring

Only tenders meeting the above pre-selection criteria will progress to scoring. The criteria that will be used to score each contract are:

- **Understanding of the requirements/brief.** Contractors must clearly demonstrate that they understand ART's requirements for each tender document submitted including all the key issues raised in sections 2 to 6.7 of this guidance document.
- **The specification of services.** Contractors should define what they will do and how this will be achieved.
- **Proposed methodology.** A method statement should be supplied detailing your working practices including health and safety arrangements, risk assessments, bio-security etc.
- **Aftercare provision.** Include details of any after care provision, performance monitoring etc. that adds value to your quotation and service.
- **Cost.** Quotations should be provided as a day rate per person inclusive of VAT (if applicable).

The shortlisted tenders will be scored using the following evaluation matrix.

Scoring Criterion	Scoring
Understanding of requirements	10%
Specification	25%
Methodology	15%
Aftercare Provision	10%
Price	40%
Total	100%

The successful candidate(s) will be determined using the pre-determined scoring criteria referred to in the table above. Submitted tenders must satisfactorily address all the pre-selection and scoring criteria detailed in section 7 above.

For ease of interpretation, tenders should be submitted in the following format with each section clearly identified:

1. Introduction
2. Pre-selection criteria
3. Understanding of the requirements
4. Specification
5. Proposed methodology
6. Aftercare provision
7. Cost, expressed as a day rate per person inclusive of VAT (where applicable)

Additional publicity literature is not required and should not be included in the tender but may be included as an appendix. Additional material supplied in an appendix will not be scored. All tenders documents submitted to ART will be retained in accordance with INTERREG IVA requirements.

8. Submissions deadline

Tender submissions should reach ART's offices by no later than 5.00pm on Friday 15th March 2013.

Submission by hard copy is the only acceptable method. ART will not accept responsibility for delivery failures in postal services regardless of the circumstances and therefore are advised to send documents in good time.

Hard copy submissions should be supplied to ART in a sealed A4 envelope clearly marked in bold on the reverse with 'Tender Documents Enclosed' along with the title of the tender. **Tenders should be returned to Ayrshire Rivers Trust, Donald Hendrie Building, Auchincruive Estate, Ayr KA6 5HW.**

Tenders submitted after the above deadlines will not be considered. ART will keep accurate records of all tenders submitted and the decision making process in accordance with INTERREG IVA requirements.

9. Tender Results

Unsuccessful contractors will be notified by email within 15 working days of the submission deadline.

Successful contractors will receive written confirmation from ART accepting their offer within 15 working days of the closing date for tender submission. ART and successful contractors will thereafter enter into a legally binding contract.

10. Terms

ART's terms of trading are detailed below.

Monthly invoices in arrears should reach ART by the 15th of the following month. i.e. work completed in September 2013 should be invoiced to ART by the 15th of October 2013.

Payment will normally be within 28 days of receipt of invoice by cheque.