



## BCO Research Specification

### Growth of Flexible Workplace: impact on the specification and lifespan of office space in the UK

The BCO is pleased to invite your company to submit a research proposal for an important research study as described below.

#### Background

Flexible workspaces have been a longstanding part of the UK property market but more recently the sector has been at the forefront of Property developers, landlords and investors' minds, as the sector has come to the fore of the leasing market, with the sector accounting for c20% of leasing in London and Birmingham in 2017 and 10% in the Thames Valley and Manchester for example. New entrants into the market appear to have transformed not only the real estate offer but the level of services to the tenant. Landlords are increasingly wanting to engage with flexible workplace operators to find out how they use their office space and work out how they can best accommodate these requirements. This sector is perceived to use its space more densely than traditional business sectors, which is likely to have implications for the specification and life span of offices in the future.

This research project will focus on whether the requirements from the sector are truly different and whether this will impact on the specification of offices. The intention is to produce a genuinely insightful piece of research which looks at how this dynamic sector is shaping the office market.

#### Research objectives and scope

The objectives of this research project are to:

- Better understand the make-up of the flexible workplace sector, which includes organisations providing traditional serviced offices, co-working, managed solutions and a hybrid of operations in between
- Comment on whether the current surge in demand from this sector (particularly as a percentage of overall demand) is likely to be sustained into the future
- Understand how the flexible workplace sector uses its space to include occupier densities and whether this has any impact on the lifespan or obsolescence rate of office buildings
- Comment on the physical challenges in accommodating this sector within an existing building

- Understand whether secondary office space can accommodate the sector
- To help the users of the BCO Guide to Specification to understand the specific needs of the flexible workplace sector

## Methodology

As a minimum, views should be formed by literature review; interviews and case studies. Where information is readily available from existing sources, this material should be used. Primary research should only be undertaken in areas where new knowledge is required to meet the research objectives.

A brief literature review will form the basis for the project to define the sector, review its development and growth to date.

Data collection will be necessary to provide insight to the sector. This will be designed to gather data on the sector demographics, culture, values, motivating factors, size, office requirements and expectations. It will also be necessary to provide building derived data on how space is actively used in order to assess its likely impact on the specification of offices.

Case studies will be used to provide real examples of how flexible workplace operators use their space and set out any adjustments they have had to make to their space to ensure that it works for them.

## Audience

The audience for this report will be BCO members and the wider property market.

## Output

The output of this project will be a concise report which will focus on:

- Empirical data from the flexible workplace sector
- High level characteristics of the sector including its demographics, evolution, ways of working and expectations of future growth
- Overview of the type of space demanded by the sector and whether secondary space can be retrofitted to accommodate flexible workplace operators
- The likely future direction of this sector in terms of office occupation patterns and the likely impact of these trends on the lifespan of today's office buildings.

The BCO Research Committee would retain the right to ask the successful party to present the findings at a maximum of two events as required, one of which will be in London. There may also be requirements to speak to the media or contribute a blog, at the BCO's discretion.

## Report structure and specifications

The final report will be text-based but due to the subject matter images will be of equal importance. The BCO will require the Contractor(s) to supply good quality images that have the necessary copyrights.

The BCO will be responsible for design and branding. We do not expect a lengthy report is required to fully address this subject and would guide

around 20-30 pages. The report must contain a robust one page executive summary which can be referred to on a standalone basis.

## Tendering process

Proposals of no more than 4 pages will be used to determine the Contractor(s). We suggest that your response sets out:

- how your proposed team will address the requirements of the study, with section headings for illustration
- your proposed project team and their relevant experience
- your appreciation of what we're trying to do
- your knowledge of the subject matter
- your capacity, time requirement and fee base

## Project Management

The project will be managed under BCO's standard framework consultancy contract. The content will be overseen by Arezou Said the BCO's Director of Research and Policy, who will also act as Contract Manager for the project. It will be peer reviewed by select members of the BCO's Research Committee. The BCO expects a named member of the Contractor's staff to be in sole charge of the project.

The Contractor will be required to update the above BCO contacts regularly on progress during the course of the project with an interim report produced according to the timing below.

## Timetable

- Invitations to tender will be concluded on or before 29<sup>th</sup> June. This will be conducted under open tender.
- The closing date for receipt of proposals will be 20<sup>th</sup> July.
- A final decision will be made on or before 2 August. Interviews may be required to select the successful party, to be determined by the BCO.
- We would expect to publish the report in early January 2019 therefore set a deadline for a first full draft of 30<sup>th</sup> October 2018 and final submission by 23<sup>rd</sup> November 2018.

## Budget

The budget for this project is limited to £20,000 excluding VAT

## General

Any information supplied by the client to the contractor during the project must be returned no later than one month after the end of the contract period. A copy of any materials used during the research programme will be required by the BCO for retention. The executive summary will be hosted on the BCO's website without access restriction. The final report will be restricted to BCO members only for a period of three months after which it will be freely available. The intellectual property of this project will be owned by the BCO but the

contractor will be permitted to use it for their own purposes from three months after publication subject to the terms in the contract.

## Further information

Any queries regarding this specification should be addressed to

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***Deadline for the proposal is 20<sup>th</sup> July 2018 at 5pm and it should be submitted by email to [arezou.said@bco.org.uk](mailto:arezou.said@bco.org.uk).***