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Document Details: Q&A in response to the call for proposals

Challenge: Secure Speech

Deadline for questions: Tuesday 1st October 2024

Questions publish date: Monday 14th October 2024

1. Is the level of improvement one you want to see on site, in a laboratory, relevant to the product alone, or for the product in combination with the existing structure?

R: Ideally, we could sign off the product regardless of the existing structure as there are many factors affecting the rooms within which this product might be implemented. However, if we were to look for a simple baseline I would be comfortable with room that was structured as a single stud wall with no insulation liner, that assumed top and bottom where a concrete slab of min 70mm and that the room includes one door, one entry vent and one exit vent for airflow.

2. Why 45 dB specifically is targeted and what this means to you

R: We need to completely damp sound from the room so accounting for human speech patterns, volume and other sound sources, so we are using 45dB as a baseline.

3. National Protective Security Authority (NPSA) specification: Is this available in the public domain? Is there a specification number we can refer to?

R: NPSA are a certification authority to which we are held up to certain standards, further information can be found on their website (<https://www.npsa.gov.uk/building-infrastructure>)

4. How is it proposed that the desired reduction of 45dB is going to be measured / assessed? Is there a proposed measurement standard for this? Would it be permissible to consider other sound metrics that focus on the transmission of speech if a clear benefit can be demonstrated?

R: Using a noise source and a microphone above ambient noise is a good starter, but we are open to suggestions that can be further discussed during the project.

5. In terms of the solution, what does “personally transportable” mean?

R: must be able to break down into components that are person carriable i.e under 30Kg on weight and sized to roughly the equivalent of hand luggage.

6. Is it acceptable for the installation / removal of the treatment to be cosmetically damaging to the room, for instance, holes for mechanical fastenings, paint damage from adhesive strips?

R: Yes

7. Are there any applicable fire standards and any other building regulations and / or material generic limitations that need to be met / considered?

R: Yes all the usual build standards and regulations for commercial premises.

8. Is this solution intended to be installed by the office user?

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R: We will likely use a tools trained maintenance technician.

9. The challenge description specifies that you consider TRL from TRL 3 (critical function proof of concept) up to TRL 5 (basic validation in relevant environment). Would you be interested in technologies with higher TRL 5?

R: Yes.

10. The challenge description specifies that you are looking for acoustic dampening to at least 45 dB attenuation. Alternatively, if not achieved in the 12-week project, then there should be a defined, clear pathway to achieve this later. Is there a minimum level of dB attenuation required for you to accept a technology during the completion process?

R: No, but I'd consider 0dB to be a tough sell.

11. Are there any specific requirements related to patents or intellectual property (IP) rights that need to be considered?

R: All information regarding IP ownership is detailed in the Terms and Conditions