



The  
**Winning Proposal**



# Proposal Benchmarking Service

What's the thing you fear most about bidding? Sheer workload; concerns that your commercials aren't quite right; that time pressures have jeopardised proposal quality? Even when such concerns are well-grounded you can still win the bid. How? Because your bid was better than your competitors. If only you knew the strengths and weaknesses of the proposals of your peers you'd win more bids, more consistently and without having to over-engineer or over-invest in your proposals.

The quality of proposals can be objectively assessed against established criteria and such an assessment provides vital information for any Bid Team looking to get better.

**But when you are in a straight shoot-out with your usual competitors what you really want to know is how good your proposals are when compared against theirs.**

If you had such comparative data you would be able to stop "over investing" in proposal areas where you are the best among your peers, diverting those saved resources to areas where you are not on a par.

**For selected sectors we have data on proposals from organisations that you may be competing against.**

Whilst the detail behind the data is strictly confidential and cannot be shared under any circumstances, where available such data sets allow us to proactively suggest areas where you would benefit from improving in your own market.

**The Winning Proposal's Benchmark Service delivers bid intelligence to make your proposals stronger where it really matters.**





### Strength Assessment

How good are your proposals? Would you say seven out of 10? Seven and a half? Higher or lower?

Your internal assessment does matter, but not as much as the scores accorded by your customers and prospects in relation to the proposals received from your competitors.

We always encourage Bid Teams to get as much feedback as possible from the prospect at the end of the bid cycle when you have lost a bid. It's also best practice to seek feedback when you have actually won.

**However, even where you are able to solicit feedback it can often be both shallow and non-committal, meaning that there is very little that you can use to build a practical, comprehensive action plan to get better**

### next time. Enter The Winning Proposal ....

#### External Expertise

The Winning Proposal team brings objectivity and experience to assessing your bids, allowing us to rigorously assess the quality of your current and past tender documents.

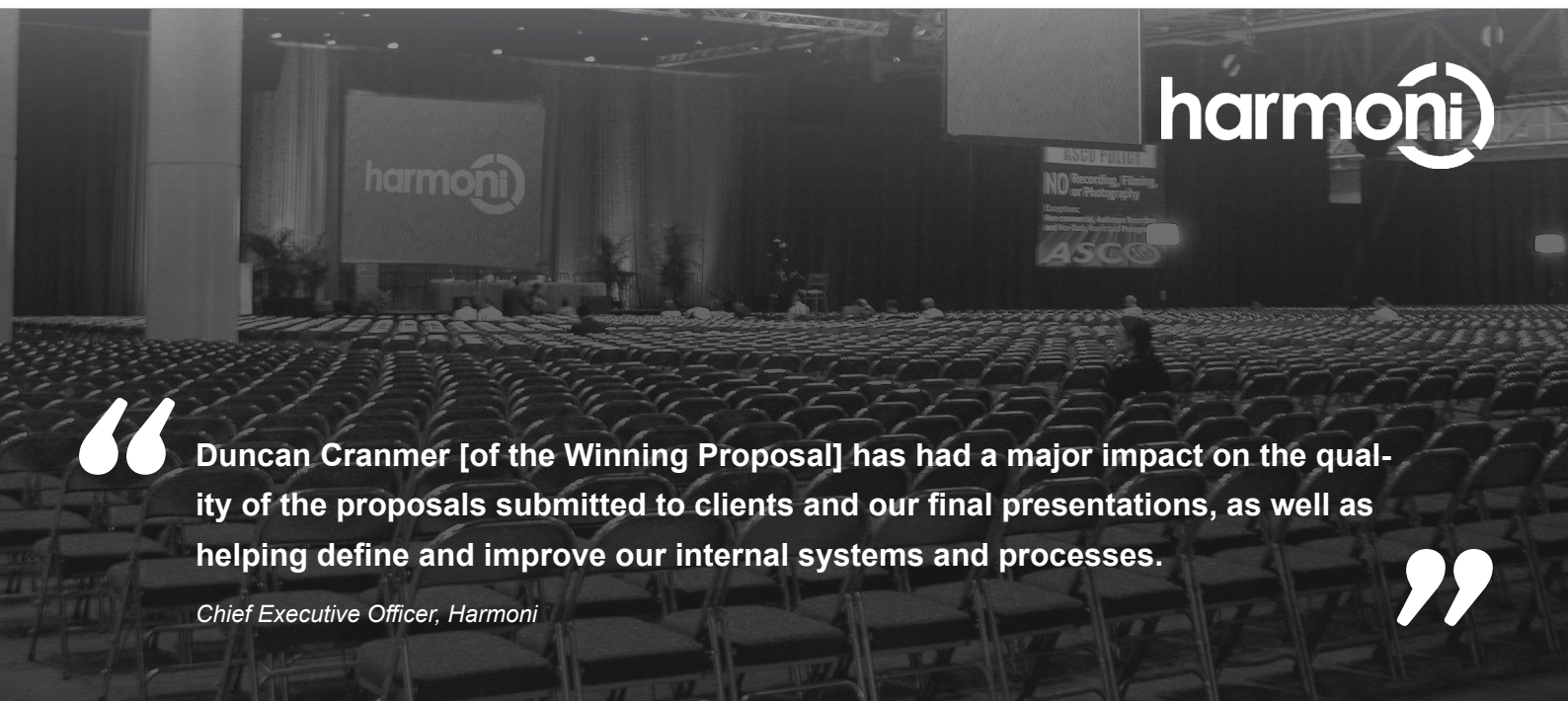
**In sport there is much discussion about “marginal gains”; about how changes can add up to make improvements – sometimes small improvements – that make the difference between coming second or third and winning.**

Benchmarking draws you to the areas where improvements to your historic approach to proposal development are necessary to get you on to the podium and in to the Number One spot.

Over the years we have learned that the needs of the companies that we work with fall into one of three categories:

- The bid team needs to get a speedy external perspective on the quality of a recent proposal to spot weaknesses for corrective “quick fixes” next time round
- Win rates are not as high as the business needs them to be and an objective “deep dive” is required, led by outside experts dedicated to excellence in proposal development
- Again, a full “deep dive” and recommendations report is required, but there is an additional desire to compare the quality of their bids against those of their industry peers and competitors

The first two requirements are catered for by our Proposal Review Service - see separate brochure.



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**Duncan Cranmer [of the Winning Proposal] has had a major impact on the quality of the proposals submitted to clients and our final presentations, as well as helping define and improve our internal systems and processes.**

*Chief Executive Officer, Harmoni*

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**Here we consider the deep dive approach and peer comparison Benchmarking Service.**

### Benchmarking

The depth of our client base in certain sectors has allowed us to objectively score proposals across sectors and sub-sectors.

**Subject to the availability of sector-specific data we offer a Benchmarking report and service assessing the relative strengths and weaknesses of your proposals against those of your peers.**

The confidentiality of data remains absolute always, with benchmarking steering you to those areas that must be prioritised for quality gains and improved win rates in your particular industry.

Our proposal consultant will review several of your most recent proposals and speak with nominated Bid Team members before developing and presenting our findings report and action plan structured as follows:

- First Impressions
- Power of your Win Themes
- Strength of the Value Proposition (VP)
- The Executive Summary
- Strength and appropriateness of writing and style
- Use of graphics and other visual elements
- Commercials (optional)
- Alignment with client's need (from the Request for Proposal, RFP)
- Recommendations (action plan)

Each of these key areas is scored using our Bid Scoring Matrix Tool so you will now objectively know exactly how good your proposals are.

In addition, we indicate how you compare in each of these scoring areas relative to your peers, where we hold comparison data.

By understanding your relative position against competitors you are enabled to make smarter investment decisions in the way you bid and operate your Bid Team.

Comparison data means that you can stop “over investing” in any proposal areas where you are already the best among your peers, whilst diverting saved resources to those areas where you are not up to the same level as peers.

### Acting on Findings

Depending on the results of the Benchmark (i.e. your bid strengths and weaknesses identified) you may subsequently choose to strengthen your proposals in one of three ways (or a combination):

- Training
- Coaching
- Workshops



**1. Training** – instructor-led training for your Bid Team with an agenda developed on the back of the Benchmark's findings. Our objective here is to train you in the areas of proposal development where improvements will have the most significant positive return in your market. However,

we also want to highlight your existing strengths so that you can continue to do what you are already good at.

**2. Coaching** – intensive, focused, intimate sessions (one on one, or one on two) with your Bid Team member (or members) with greatest responsibility for improving proposals and speeding their development.

**3. Workshops** – facilitated workshops that sit somewhere between instructor-training and more intimate, targeted coaching. By involving all or the majority of your Bid Team in the Proposal Development Workshop, participants are actively supported in the sharing of new ideas. Interactive workshops constructed on proven principles of collaboration and sharing serve to spread new ideas and best practice quickly. And when the workshop is done, because everyone learned together, Bid Team colleagues are able to offer each other high levels of mutual support and encouragement because everyone has been on the same journey. This commonality of experience and learning reinforces best practice and carries it into all of your future bids.

### What Next?

Are you losing out unnecessarily to your competition in important tenders?

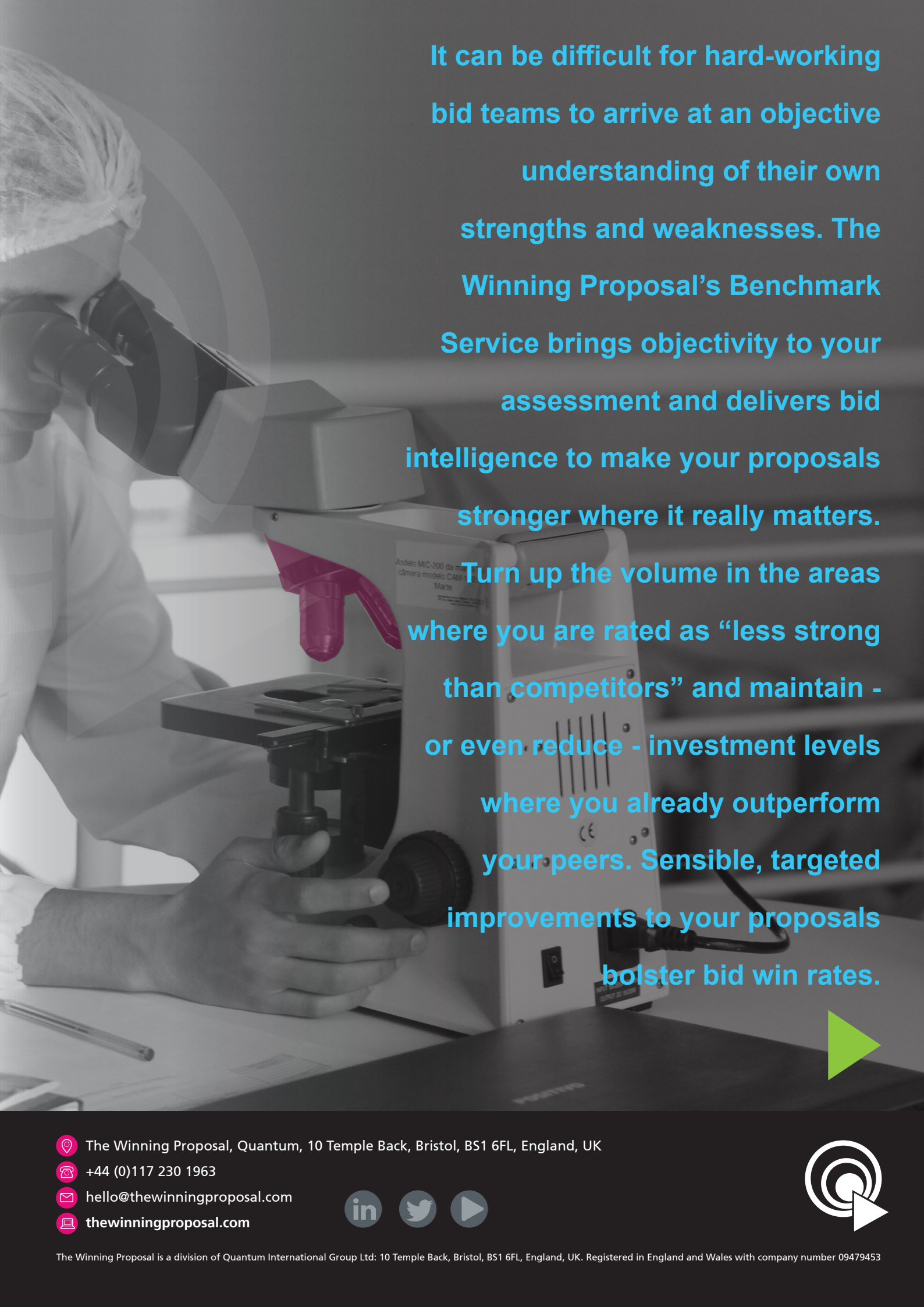
**If you are not satisfied with your bid win rates or just feel that you can do better without being able to put your finger on where or how, our Proposal Benchmarking Review Service guides you to the areas where improvements matter.**

We will need to agree with you the scope of the exercise and your primary objectives and get a Non-Disclosure Agreement (NDA) signed to protect your confidentiality.







**His [Duncan Cranmer of the Winning Proposal] role in delivering key wins, particularly in London and in the South West, was very important to us.**





It can be difficult for hard-working  
bid teams to arrive at an objective  
understanding of their own  
strengths and weaknesses. The  
Winning Proposal's Benchmark  
Service brings objectivity to your  
assessment and delivers bid  
intelligence to make your proposals  
stronger where it really matters.  
Turn up the volume in the areas  
where you are rated as "less strong  
than competitors" and maintain -  
or even reduce - investment levels  
where you already outperform  
your peers. Sensible, targeted  
improvements to your proposals  
bolster bid win rates.



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