



Request for Tender (RFT) for Inclusion on

Panel for the Provision of

Environmental Services 2025-2027

March 2025

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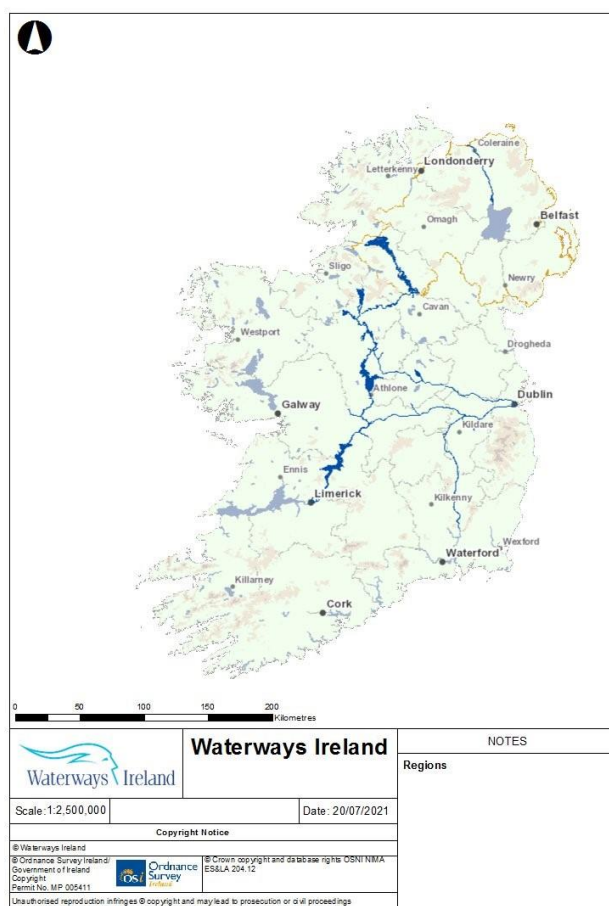
1 INTRODUCTION

Waterways Ireland (hereinafter referred to as the “Contracting Authority”) is the largest of the North-South Implementation bodies established under statute and has a statutory remit to manage, maintain, develop, and restore certain navigable inland waterways in Ireland, principally for recreational purposes. The seven navigations under the Contracting Authority's remit include the Lower Bann, the Erne System, the Shannon-Erne Waterway, the Royal and Grand Canals, the Barrow Navigation, and the Shannon Navigation.

Further information is available at our corporate website www.waterwaysireland.org

Ecological services are required along inland waterways both in the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland. The network is divided into 3 regions:

- Eastern Region (including Grand and Royal Canals, Barrow Line and Barrow Navigation),
- Western Region (including the Shannon)
- Northern region (including Shannon Erne Waterway, The Erne System and the Lower Bann).



The objective of this request for tender (RFT) is to establish a panel of pre-qualified suppliers that can be called on for quotations/mini tenders on various projects for Waterways Ireland once specific needs arise. The categories of service required over the duration of the panel are outlined in **Appendix I – Specification of Requirements**.

It is important to note that inclusion on this panel does not guarantee a contract to deliver services to Waterways Ireland.

2 INSTRUCTIONS TO TENDERERS

The detailed instructions regarding the format and requirements of this RFT are set out in **Appendix II**. These instructions must be observed to ensure the completeness and eligibility of the tender.

3 AWARD CRITERIA

3.1 Panel

The panel will be established from the qualifying tenders based on the most economically advantageous tender, using the following awarding criteria:

Criterion	Assessment	Score Available	
Relevant Experience	The highest scores will be awarded to the providers who have relevant experience in delivering similar services and projects.	400	40%
Qualifications	Will be assessed and scored based on the relevant technical qualifications of nominated individual(s) who will deliver the services.	300	30%
Blended Daily Rate	Lowest Cost from a Bona Fide Tender A Cost for the tender being evaluated B Formula employed: $\frac{A \times 300}{B}$	300	30%
Total Score Available		1000	100%

Only the tenderers who score a minimum of 50% of the marks available for non-cost criteria will be admitted to the panel.

Responses received will be assessed based on the award criterion and successful applicants will be admitted to the panel. Within four (4) weeks from the receipt of the completed RFT, the Contracting Authority will inform the Applicant in writing of the outcome of the assessment and, in the case of unsuccessful applications, the reasons for their rejection. The Contracting Authority invites all unsuccessful applicants to re-submit an application that meets the minimum requirements at any time during the currency of the panel.

Inclusion on the panel does not constitute a contract and the Contracting Authority cannot guarantee that a contract will be awarded to any member of the panel. Inclusion on the panel does not guarantee the member the right to tender in respect of any contract.

3.2 Call-off Contracts

Once established, the Panel will be used as the basis for awarding subsequent call-off contracts to Panel Participants. **These contracts will be awarded using the CASCADE method.** Under this method, the award of contract will be made on the basis of the ranking of tenders.

Starting with the highest-ranking member (No. 1) for the initial contract and any subsequent contract, the Contracting Authority will request, in writing, a statement of their capability and interest for the contract. The Panel member will be given one week to respond. Note that Waterways Ireland reserves the right to reduce this response period from ONE (1) week to TWO (2) days where there are time constraints,

If this Panel member does not have capacity, is not interested in carrying out the contract or if agreement cannot be reached, Waterways Ireland will proceed to the next highest ranked Panel member until a contract is awarded. In the event that none of the Panel members are capable of or interested in delivering the contract, the Contracting Authority reserves the right to carry out a separate contract award procedure.

It will be a condition precedent to appointment to any contract under the panel that the successful tenderer designate provides evidence:

- (i) that the insurances required by that contract are in place;
- (ii) that a Tax Clearance Certificate issued by the Irish Revenue Commissioners for the panel member and any sub-contractor proposed is submitted;
- (iii) that, if requested, verification of the SAQ submission to ensure that there has been no material change to the suitability of that panel member

The terms and conditions of any contract awarded under the panel will be those of the Contracting Authority at the time of awarding of such contract. If, for any reason, it is not possible to conclude a contract with the successful panel member or, if, having concluded that contract, the Contracting Authority decides to terminate that contract, the Contracting Authority reserves the right to award the contract to the next highest scoring panel member on the basis of the same terms and as tendered by that party at any time during the tender validity period. This shall be without prejudice to the right of the Contracting Authority to cancel that competitive process and/or initiate a new contract award procedure at its sole discretion.

4 DURATION OF THE PANEL

The panel will run for a period of **two (2) years** with an option to extend by a **further 12 months** subject to funding. Tenderers can be selected for inclusion on the panel throughout its duration - it will remain open on e-tenders for this period. To facilitate any further extensions a notification will be posted on e-tenders and the panel response deadline will be extended on the site. The scope of the services required over the duration of the panel will depend on demand and availability of funding.

5 INELIGIBILITY UNDER EU RULES

Tenderers to whom any of the circumstances listed as per Article 57 of EU Council Directive 2014/24/EU apply [this directive repeals Directive 2004/18/EC], will be excluded from this competition [Broadly, these circumstances are criminal activity, bankruptcy, professional misconduct, terrorism, child labour/other forms of trafficking and failure to pay taxes or social security contributions]. Tenderers are requested to declare that none of these circumstances apply to them – use the declaration form enclosed in **section 2 of the tender response document**.

6 INSTRUCTIONS TO TENDERERS

6.1 Tender Format & Delivery

Tenders must be completed in accordance with the format specified in **Appendix II. The tender response document provided must be used**. Incomplete tenders or tenders that do not follow the prescribed format will be rejected.

6.2 Tax Affairs

Applicants must declare in **section 1.7 of the response document** that tax affairs are fully in order and shall remain so for the duration of any contract that may be awarded resulting from this panel.

6.3 Insurance

All tenderers must provide evidence of relevant professional insurance.

6.4 Confidentiality and Intellectual Property

Waterways Ireland requires that all information provided pursuant to this invitation to tender be treated in strict confidence by tenderers.

6.5 Freedom of Information Act

In order to comply with legislation on the Freedom of Information Waterways Ireland as a North South Body operates a Code of Practice for Freedom of Information. The primary purpose of this code is to facilitate access by members of the public to information held by the body which is not routinely made available.

The objective is to provide:

- Greater openness and accountability and increased public confidence in the workings of North South Bodies, and
- Improvement in the quality of decision making by North South Bodies

Anyone corresponding with Waterways Ireland through any tender or procurement process should be aware that any information provided in the tender or other correspondence may be made available if requested under the Freedom of Information Code of Practice.

Waterways Ireland will consult with applicants or tenderers about sensitive information in their tender or correspondence before deciding on the disclosure of any such information in response to a request under the relevant Freedom of Information legislation.

A decision on what information can be released under the relevant Freedom of Information legislation is the sole prerogative of Waterways Ireland.

A copy of the Freedom of Information Code of Practice is available on the Waterways Ireland website www.waterwaysireland.org under Other Information or by writing to:

FOI Liaison Officer
Chief Executives Office
Waterways Ireland
2 Sligo Rd
Enniskillen
Co. Fermanagh
BT74 7JY
Telephone +0044 (0)2866 323004

6.6 Conflicts-of-Interest

Any conflicts-of-interest involving a tenderer must be fully disclosed to Waterways Ireland. Failure to disclose a conflict-of-interest may disqualify a bidder or invalidate an award of contract, depending on when the conflict-of-interest comes to light. If no conflict of interest exists, tenderers must indicate that in the declaration form, enclosed in **section 1.6 of the response document**.

6.7 Non-Exclusivity

The Contracting authority reserves the right, at their sole discretion, to engage in a separate procurement procedure outside that of the Panel for any service requirements arising during the lifetime of the Panel.

APPENDIX I - Specification of Requirements

Listed below are the service categories and are examples of services required by Waterways Ireland. This list is not exhaustive.

1. Category 1 – Mammal Surveys

The contractor will be required to provide a range of services including the following:

- Desktop assessment of existing reports as well as relevant ecological records
- Consultation with NPWS, Local Authorities and Waterways Ireland (Environment) staff may have records of sightings and evidence of mammals in the area.
- Extensive site searches for any signs of mammal usage to include holts and other signs including, footprints, spraints, seats, couches etc.
- Assessment of potential impacts and significance of effects of any works on protected mammal species (e.g. otter and badger) and knowledge of setback distances specified in recognised national guidance. Preparation of derogation licences and the design of appropriate mitigation measures where breeding or resting places of protected mammals occur.
- Map any signs and evidence of mammal presence and usage.
- Map any areas identified as suitable for use as potential mammal habitat – eg undisturbed or inaccessible areas likely to provide seclusion and protection to mammals.

2. Category 2 – Bat Surveys

The range of services required includes the following examples:

- Preliminary ecological site appraisals for bats including undertaking desktop studies;
- Assessment of potential suitability of proposed development or works sites for bats, based on presence of habitat features within the landscape;
- Preliminary roost inspections of trees and built structures to identify potential roost features, or actual roosts;
- The surveyor must hold the necessary licence to undertake physical inspection where there is potential to disturb roosting bats (e.g. through the use of torches or inspection cameras);
- Carrying out of emergence/re-entry surveys of identified roost sites according to best practice guidelines;
- Applications for derogation licences and the development of appropriate mitigation measures according to best practice guidelines (e.g. Bat Mitigation Guidelines for Ireland, NPWS, 2022).

3. Category 3 – Bird Surveys

The services required include bird surveys carried out according to best practice guidelines with specific focus on birds associated with inland Waterways, designated conservation sites, and adjoining areas including:

- Kingfisher surveys to identify nesting sites, perches, and suitable nesting and foraging habitats;
- Waterbird surveys according to recognised methods (e.g. BTO WeBS, Birdwatch Ireland IWeBS);
- General wintering and breeding bird surveys according to standard methods.

4. Category 4 – Electrofishing

Electro-fishing will be carried out following the guidance of European standards for electro-fishing (CEN 2003) and under a Section 14 license issued by the Department of the Environment, Climate and Communications.

The contractor will be required to apply for a section 14 Electrofishing License application.

The contractor is to provide all their own equipment (see note below on WI provision of a boat) required for the electrofishing work, including biosecurity measures and associated cleaning equipment.

Waterways Ireland can make available to the successful contractor a 2.7m (2-3man) plastic Whaley boat (suitable for local access on small waterways).

Full Biosecurity measures to be employed by the contractor to prevent the spread or introduction of invasive species, in line with best practice guidance.

5. Category 5 – Aquatic ecological surveys

The appointed contractor will be required to undertake specialist survey and sampling for sensitive and protected aquatic ecological interest within river, lake and canal environments. These will include habitat assessment and / or sampling for the following:

- Salmonid fish
- Coarse fish
- Lamprey (brook, river and sea)
- Macrophytes
- Invertebrates including but not limited to: Crayfish, freshwater mussel species, and EPA Q-value biotic index sampling.
- Invasive species

6. Category 6 – Terrestrial ecological surveys

The consultant will provide ecological survey and mapping services in the terrestrial environment to determine and evaluate ecological interest within specific works areas or project scope, to include;

- Desktop study of relevant ecological records
- Carry out an inventory of flora, fauna, mammals and birds, including any invasive species.
 - Classify and map the habitats according to Fossitt (2000) and where appropriate the identification Annex I habitats using the Irish Vegetation Classification (IVC), and the Habitats Directive (European Commission, 2013) classification scheme as applicable to the Republic of Ireland
 - Habitat mapping undertaken in Northern Ireland to be carried out according to the JNCC Phase 1 terrestrial habitat mapping scheme, and NVC, where applicable
- Identification and survey of rare and protected plant species listed in the Flora Protection Order 2022.
- Identify Ecologically Sensitive Areas in the study area
- Prepare a GIS database of habitat mapping, rare species records, invasive species and other ecological and management features.

7. Category 7 – Specialist invertebrate surveys

Waterways Ireland will require specialist ecological input for protected and / or Red Listed invertebrate species, to include baseline surveys, evaluation of population and conservation status, as well as impact assessments for project proposals. The appointed contractor must be able to demonstrate professional experience working with these species and hold or procure relevant licences from NPWS / NIEA. Species specific surveys may include:

- Survey of protected invertebrates including Annex II species Marsh Fritillary and Vertigo species.
- Survey of rare and red-listed invertebrate species to including aquatic and terrestrial groups.

8. Category 8 – Ecological Constraints surveys

The appointed contractor will be required to carry out a high level constraints study and ecological surveys of a defined project or study area comprising, but not limited to, the following: extended phase 1 habitat surveys as described by CIEEM (2017); usage by protected mammals; the presence of potential bat roosts; fisheries and aquatic interests; invasive species and the presence of other protected or notable species. The appointee will provide:

- A high-level report detailing ecological constraints
- A map, displaying habitats and constraints within study area
- Coordinates of ecological receptors and significant features such as mammal burrows / resting places, and potential bat roost features
- Recommendations for mitigation and avoidance of impacts to identified receptors based on the project description.

Note:

- **The services may be required once, more than once or not at all, depending on the demand and availability of funding.**
- Once a need for any of the above listed services will arise, Waterways Ireland will follow the options as outlined in section 4 of this document.
- Tenderers may choose to tender for one, more than one or all the above listed service categories.
- Tenderers must clearly indicate which service categories they are tendering for, using the questionnaire enclosed in the **tender response document**.
- For tenderers to be considered for selection it is important that they provide sufficient information on their skills / qualifications and experience in **sections 1.3 and 1.4 of the response document**.

APPENDIX II – Tenderer Submission

In submitting the proposal, tenderers must respect all instructions, forms and terms and conditions contained in this RFT. Failure to submit all required information within the specified format may lead to rejection of the tender.

The awarding of successful tenders is subject to funding.

Tenderers must observe the following:

1. Tenderers must complete the questionnaire provided in the ***Tender response document*** and include a completed, signed and dated declaration in order to participate in this competition **(no other tender format will be accepted and may result in disqualification)**.
2. A digital copy of the tender must be submitted through the etender.gov.ie portal ONLY - no other format will be accepted.

This panel will remain open on e-tenders for a period of two years but Waterways Ireland reserve the right to extend the panel for a further 12 months subject to the availability of funding.

Queries

Every effort has been made to ensure that this RFT contains all the necessary information for completion of tenders. However, in the interests of equity for all tenderers, requests for additional information, clarification on the contents of this RFT and all other queries of substance (other than those relating to purely factual or procedural matters) shall be made via e tenders messaging facility. Queries received over the phone or by email shall not be responded to. Responses to all queries received regarding this tender will be posted on the messaging facility on e-tenders, making any additional information available to all interested parties.