

Request for Tenders for the Establishment of a Single-Party Framework - Provision of a Specialised Project Manager for Phase 2 of the Grant Management System for the Health Research Board (HRB)

Procedure	Open Procedure
Issue Date	As per etenders
Closing Date for Queries	As per etenders
Closing Date for Submissions	As per etenders
Contact for Queries	Via eTenders
Please note that information relating to this Request for Tender, including clarifications and changes, will be published on the Irish Government Procurement Opportunities Portal www.etenders.gov.ie. Registration is free of charge and there is no charge for documents. Please note that the Contracting Authority accepts no responsibility for information relayed (or not relayed) via third parties.	

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1 ABOUT THE CONTRACTING AUTHORITY

1.1 The Contracting Authority

The Health Research Board, herein after referred to as the “HRB” or the “Contracting Authority”, is the authority responsible for this procurement.

The HRB is a statutory agency under the aegis of the Department of Health of Ireland. The HRB’s mission is to support research that improves people’s health, promotes evidence-informed care, and creates solutions to societal challenges. Our vision is ‘better health through excellent research, data and evidence.’ An overview of the HRB’s objectives and activities may be found in The HRB Strategy 2021-2025, “Health research - making an impact.” (www.hrb.ie/strategy-2025/).

Further information is available at our corporate website www.hrb.ie.

1.2 Disclaimer

This Request for Tenders (RFT) document issued herewith (“the Document”) is for information only and does not constitute, and shall not be interpreted as, an offer for sale, prospectus, or the basis of a contract.

Tenderers are recommended to read the documents thoroughly. While all reasonable steps have been taken to ensure that the information set out in the Document is accurate and up to date, no representation or warranty, express or implied, is or will be made or given in relation to the accuracy or the completeness of any information contained in the Document or otherwise provided by or on behalf of the Contracting Authority (in writing or otherwise) to any interested party or its advisers. No responsibility or liability for any loss or damage arising as a result of reliance on these documents, or for the information contained in these documents or for any omission is or will be accepted by the Contracting Authority or by any of its officers, employees, agents or professional advisers. No officer, employee, agent, or professional adviser of the company has any authority to give or make any representation or warranty, express or implied, in relation to such information. The Contracting Authority’s officers, employees, agents, and professional advisers expressly disclaim any and all liability arising out of such documentation or information and any errors or omissions in or from the documents and information.

The Contracting Authority reserves the right to discontinue the procurement process at any time.

1.3 Use of eTenders

Please note that information relating to this Request for Tender, including clarifications and changes, will be published on the Irish Government Procurement Opportunities Portal www.etenders.gov.ie. Registration is free of charge and there is no charge for documents. Please note that the Contracting Authority accepts no responsibility for information relayed (or not relayed) via third parties. In order to submit a response, it is mandatory to have **ASSOCIATED** your company with the competition using the eTenders log in.

1.4 Use of a Tender Response Document

The Contracting Authority has provided a Tender Response Document (TRD) as a separate document for tenderers to use in preparing their response to this tender. This document and format must be used. Tenderers should note that personalisation of the TRD is not allowed, and they must not add their branding/colours to the TRD.

Please note that in addition to this RFT, the following documents form part of the tender documentation:

- Tender Response Document
- Appendix 1 – Draft Framework Agreement Terms and Conditions
- Appendix 2 – Draft Call-Off Contract
- ESPD Template
- Any Clarification documents issued by the Contracting Authority during the tender submission period. Tenderers must ensure they regularly monitor eTenders and review any Clarification documents published.

It is recommended to upload your response as a **Zip file** in order to protect the integrity of file names.

1.5 Small and Medium Enterprise Participation

It is the policy of the Contracting Authority to promote participation by Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) on a fair and equal basis.

SMEs are encouraged to explore the possibilities of forming relationships with other SMEs or with larger enterprises to meet the financial, economic or technical capacity requirements of the competition, if required.

Tenderers may include individuals, partnerships, limited companies, groupings or any combination of the foregoing with or without legal personality. However, a grouping if successful will be required to establish legal personality to enter the framework agreement / contract.

Tenderers are reminded that they may rely on the resources of other entities to establish the requirements on condition that they can prove to the satisfaction of the Contracting Authority that they will have these resources at their disposal when necessary.

If the tender is from a consortium / joint venture, tenderers must ensure that all the relevant information is provided and where necessary, provide the information requested separately for each party. Relevant information relates to where a tenderer is relying on the resources to qualify (e.g. turnover, personnel, previous experience) and/or to deliver contracts. The consortium must appoint a single point of contact who will assume overall responsibility for delivery, and who is authorised to sign the framework agreement / contract on behalf of all consortia members. The Contracting Authority will not act as an arbitrator between members of consortia.

2 ABOUT THE FRAMEWORK AGREEMENT

2.1 Type of Framework

The Contracting Authority invites tenders for the establishment of a framework agreement. A framework agreement constitutes a means of establishing overall terms and conditions in accordance with which, for a specified duration, individual contracts may or may not be awarded.

This competition relates to the establishment of a single-party framework with one economic operator.

2.2 Overview of Requirements under the Framework Agreement

2.2.1 The Scope of the Framework Agreement

The scope of the Framework Agreement is the provision of a Project Manager to provide specialised support services and oversee the management of the Implementation Phases of the Grants Management System for the HRB. Tenderers should refer to Section 3 of this document for a detailed description of the scope, functional requirements, and related services to be delivered under the Framework Agreement.

2.2.2 The Scope of the Initial Call-Off Contract

The initial call-off contract will be for the provision of specialised project management services for Phase Two of the Grants Management System – Implementation Phase.

The contract is expected to commence in February 2026.

While it is indicated that the initial contract may be awarded to the most economically advantageous tender immediately following the establishment of the framework, it should be noted that the Contracting Authority may at its sole discretion establish the framework agreement without awarding the initial contract should the circumstances so dictate.

2.2.3 Additional / Call-Off Contracts under the Framework

There is no guarantee of additional contracts, but where they arise, the Contracting Authority will consult the member of the framework agreement in accordance with the rules of operation outlined in this Request for Tender.

2.3 Numbers admitted to the Framework

The framework agreement will be established as a single-party framework agreement with the tenderer selected following the tender stage and the application of the award criteria and subject to that tenderer meeting the minimum criteria and rules.

2.4 Duration of the Framework Agreement

The framework agreement will be for a maximum period of two (2) years.

The Contracting Authority confirms that the period of any contracts awarded under the framework agreement may extend beyond the date of expiry of the agreement.

2.5 Estimated Value for the Framework Agreement

It is envisaged that maximum spend under this two-year framework agreement will not exceed €174,000 excluding VAT.

It is emphasised, however, that this figure is provided strictly for indicative purposes only as there is no guaranteed expenditure under the framework agreement.

2.6 Awarding Contracts under the Framework Agreement

Under a single-party framework agreement, contracts may be awarded directly on foot of the original tenders or by consultation with the Framework Member and invitation to provide a supplementary tender within the constraints laid down in this tender documentation and the framework agreement terms and conditions.

2.7 Right to tender outside of the Framework

The Contracting Authority intends to use the framework for the procurement of requirements falling within its scope during the specified period; however, it reserves the right to go outside the framework agreement for the procurement of any requirement without reference to the Framework Member. Admission to a framework agreement does not guarantee the award of any contract to any economic operator, nor does it give the Framework Member the right to be consulted in respect of, or tender for, any contract.

2.8 Compliance with the Terms and Conditions of the Framework Agreement

Admission to the framework agreement will be conditional upon acceptance of the Contracting Authority's Framework Terms and Conditions as appended at the relevant Appendix.

Tenderers are required to review these terms and conditions and indicate their acceptance thereof as part of their tender submission. Any reservation with regard to these terms should be submitted as a query in accordance with the procedure described in the Section below in the Instructions to Tenderers of this document.

2.9 Contract Terms and Conditions

In addition, tenderers should review the Call-Off Contract Terms and Conditions which will apply to each discrete assignment (call-off contract) under the framework, as appended at the relevant Appendix.

2.10 Award to Runner Up

If for any reason, it is not possible to admit to the framework agreement the tenderer invited following the conclusion of this competitive process, the Contracting Authority reserves the right to invite the next highest scoring tenderer to join the framework agreement as appropriate, at any time during the tender validity period.

If it is not possible following the conclusion of the competitive process to award the initial contract to the designated successful tenderer from this competitive process; the Contracting Authority reserves the

right to award the initial contract to the tenderer with the next highest score based on the original competition, at any time during the tender validity period.

If, following the award of any contract under this framework agreement during the tender validity period, the Framework Member cannot, for whatever reason, deliver the required services to the satisfaction of the Contracting Authority; the Contracting Authority reserves the right to award the framework to the next highest scoring tenderer.

3 Detailed Specification of Requirements

The Health Research Board is a statutory agency under the aegis of the Department of Health of Ireland. The HRB's mission is to support research that improves people's health, promotes evidence-informed care, and creates solutions to societal challenges. Our vision is 'better health through excellent research, data and evidence.' An overview of the HRB's objectives and activities may be found in The HRB Strategy 2021-2025, "Health research - making an impact." (www.hrb.ie/strategy-2025).

The HRB, as Ireland's main funder for health research, has been using an electronic grant management system since 2002, with the current system (Grant Tracker from Symplectic) in place since 2013. The Grant Tracker system is being discontinued by the provider, with a sunset date of 31 December 2026, without further access to data or functionality beyond that date.

To replace Grant Tracker, the HRB are carrying out a two-phase project.

Phase 1 is the procurement of a GMS system that must be live before the current system is decommissioned. This is being conducted in a separate competition with the anticipated commencement of the successful tenderer beginning work in February 2026.

The RFT for the Provision of a GMS with full specification of requirements can be found here: <https://www.etenders.gov.ie/epps/cft/listContractDocuments.do?resourceId=6861818>

The HRB is now seeking to establish a Single-Party Framework Agreement for the Provision of Specialised Project Management Services for Phase 2 of this project – Implementation Phase. The estimated duration of this role is for 24 months beginning in February 2026.

3.1 Scope of Requirement under the Framework Agreement

The scope of the framework agreement is for the provision of specialised project management services and the co-ordination and management of data migration during the Implementation Phase of the Grant Management System.

3.2 Scope of Requirement under the Framework Agreement – Initial Contract

The framework agreement will be established on foot of this tender competition. The initial contract will be awarded to the successful tenderer shortly after the formal establishment of the framework agreement.

The initial call-off contract will be for specialised project management services during Phase 2 Implementation.

This includes:

- Project initiation in partnership with the chosen supplier, ensuring clarity on scope, deliverables, roles and responsibilities
- Ongoing liaison with the supplier and HRB ensuring that project progress aligns with agreed timelines, deliverables and compliance requirements
- Creation and management of the project schedule/plan, ensuring that the HRB meets its deadline
- Reporting progress against the agreed plan including planned versus actual expenditure.
- Creation and delivery of all necessary project status reporting
- Identification and management of project risks and issues to successful outcomes
- Ensuring all project documentation and artefacts are created and maintained throughout the project
- Supporting team members in project tasks as appropriate
- Adherence to best practice project management principle

3.3 Project Manager Requirements

The successful tender must meet the below requirements:

- Large scale ICT systems implementation experience
- Proven ability to manage cross-functional teams in a busy project setting
- Experience of managing significant data migration from disparate legacy systems
- Good knowledge of grant management processes
- Ability to engage with internal and external stakeholders at all levels
- Excellent communication skills
- Proven vendor management skills

The project manager will be required to work 2-3 days per week throughout 2026, with frequency reducing thereafter.

Other requirements of the project manager during the contract are:

- Consult with GMS Steering Group, with fortnightly reporting on deliverables (or as agreed)
- Work closely with Work closely with nominated line manager
- Solicit configuration input from internal and external user groups as agreed
- Closely coordinate with the vendor team throughout the delivery and hyper-care period
- Conduct first pass UAT before passing on to HRB for testing
- Identify in a timely manner potential other needed resources e.g. to deliver data migration or change management
- Identify in a timely manner and coordinate all strands of the overall implementation project.

3.4 Project Reporting

The following meeting and reporting schedule will apply.

Audience	Frequency	Contents
Project Team	Weekly	• Progress on activities detailed in the project plan • Deviations from the plan and recovery action being taken • Identification of any barriers to progress • Risk review • Issue review • Lookahead to next period
Steering Group	Fortnightly	• Activities and deliverables completed during the period • Deviations from the plan and recovery action being taken • Budget, including all associated GM costs • Movement in risks, issues and changes • Decisions required • Change requests arising • Risks, issues and changes requiring escalation • Lookahead to next period
HRB Executive/ARC/Board	As required	• Project status – progress, schedule & budget • High severity risk and issue review • Decisions / approvals sought (as required)

The Project Manager will compile all necessary status reports and presentations with input from the Project Team members.

3.5 Details of Additional Contracts under the Framework Agreement

In addition to the initial contract, the framework agreement will also be used for additional related requirements that may arise over the lifetime of the agreement.

4 SELECTION CRITERIA

The Contracting Authority is using the **Open** procedure for the award of this framework agreement, therefore, while all interested parties may submit a tender, only those tenders that are deemed valid and that meet all of the selection criteria listed below will be considered under the award criteria. In order to demonstrate a tenderers' qualifications, tenderers are required to provide the information set out below in the Tender Response Document (TRD) which is based on a self-declaration model, however tenderers are required to provide the minimum information required.

4.1 Use of the European Single Procurement Document

In accordance with Directive 2014/24/EU, tenderers may have compiled a European Single Procurement Document (ESPD), either electronically via the eESPD on eTenders or as a separate uploaded attachment with the tender response, which will be accepted as evidence of compliance with the selection criteria on condition that all information self-declared will be provided promptly on request at any time prior to an award decision.

4.2 Relying on the Standing of Other Entities

Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) are encouraged to explore the possibilities of forming relationships with other SMEs or with larger enterprises to meet the financial, economic or technical capacity requirements of the competition, if required.

Tenderers are reminded that they may rely on the resources of other entities in order to meet criteria and / or deliver elements of the contract requirements on condition that they can prove to the satisfaction of the client that they will have these resources at their disposal when necessary.

Therefore, a tenderer may consist of a grouping of any number of economic operators¹. Where a group come together in whatever form i.e. consortium, joint venture, subcontractors etc. to submit a Tender in response to this Request for Tender and regardless of the legal relationship between them, the Contracting Authority will deal with all matters relating to this competition through the entity (the "Lead Tenderer") who will carry overall responsibility for the performance of the contract only, if successful irrespective of whether or not tasks are to be performed by a subcontractor or other consortium member.

The Lead Tenderer must clearly and comprehensively set out the name, title, telephone number, postal address, and email address of the nominated contact personnel authorised to represent the tenderer and to whom all communications shall be directed and accepted until this competition has been completed or terminated. Correspondence from any other person (including from any subcontractor) will not be accepted or responded to.

All Lead Tenderers relying on the capacity of other entities must:

- Identify in the TRD as the Lead Tenderer for the grouping with whom the Contracting Authority will communicate and with whom any subsequent contractual arrangements will be made if successful.
- Identify in the TRD the relevant third parties upon whose capacity the Lead Tenderer is relying upon to meet selection criteria and / or deliver elements of the contract and identify the relevant criteria and elements of the contract.
- Ensure the TRD including all subsections are completed and submitted for all relevant third parties upon whom the Lead Tenderer is relying on to meet criteria and / or deliver elements of the contract if awarded.
- In all tenders, the Lead Tenderer must nominate the reference contracts for inclusion in the assessment and selection process. The number of reference contracts for which details are to

¹ 'Economic operator' means any natural or legal person or public entity or group of such persons and / or entities, including any temporary association of undertakings, which offers the execution of works and / or a work, the supply of products or the provision of services on the market; (Art 2(10) of Directive 2014/24/EU).

be provided will be nominated in the TRD of the Lead Tenderer. If more reference contracts are provided than required only the first listed reference contracts to the number specified (e.g. 3 reference contracts) will be considered. Where relying on the experience of others, at least one of the references provided should include reference to their relevant experience.

Where the tenderer consists of a grouping of economic operators and the tenderer is subsequently successful at tender stage, the Contracting Authority may require the members of the tender grouping to enter into a formal arrangement that can support the provision of collateral warranties to the Contracting Authority for the group members' performance, etc. of the contract.

4.3 General, Legal and Financial Requirements

Tenderers are required to provide information on the following in the **Tender Response Document or ESPD** as directed. The criteria and rules outlined below are assessed on a pass/fail basis. Failure to comply with the requirements will result in the tender being considered inadmissible.

General Information

Provide contact and general information on the tendering organisation - company name, address and contact details for individual responsible for this tender and company overview as well as the role of the framework and likely percentage of the value for each sub-contractor, information on sub-contractors and consortium members if applicable.

Declarations

- Declarations relating to Bona Fides (as per Art. 57 of Directive 2014/24/EU as implemented by SI 2814 of May 2016) and compliance with relevant statutory obligations must be made in the European Single Procurement Document (ESPD). The ESPD can be completed electronically via the eESPD on eTenders (under "EO Administration") or as a separate uploaded attachment with the tender response. Note that that ESPD must be signed by an authorised representative of the Economic Operator. An ESPD template is provided with this RFT and is available for download from eTenders should the Economic Operator choose to use the manual form rather than the eESPD on eTenders.
- Economic Operators must complete the Declaration regarding the International Procurement Instrument (2022/1031) and article 5K of Regulation 2022/576 on restrictive measures in the Context of Russian Actions in the Ukraine. Which is provided in the Tender Response Document.
- The Contracting Authority may decide to examine tenders before verifying the absence of exclusion grounds in Regulation 57 of the regulations (the "Exclusion Grounds") and the fulfilment of the Selection Criteria.
However, notwithstanding anything contrary in this part, The Contracting Authority reserves the right to ask Tenderers at any moment during the Competition to submit any of the following for the purposes of verification of the status of the tenderer (including Prime Contractor and any Subcontractor).
(i) information concerning the Tenderer, and any proposed subcontractors, for the purposes of Regulation (EU) No 833/2014 (as amended by EU Regulation 2022/576 or any subsequent amendments to same) including, but not limited to, in respect of natural persons, copies of identity documents and, in respect of legal persons, a certificate or extract from the commercial register or other competent authority of the country in which the legal person is established.
(ii) and information concerning the origin of goods, if any, for the purposes of assessing compliance with Regulation (EU) No 833/2014 (as amended by EU Regulation 2022/576 or any subsequent amendments to same).
- If a Tenderer does not, upon request by the Contracting Authority, provide evidence which is considered by the Contracting Authority as sufficient to demonstrate (i) its fulfilment of the Selection Criteria (or any one of them) in accordance with this RFT and (ii) the absence of Exclusion Grounds, or its reliability despite the existence of a relevant Exclusion Ground and (iii) that it does not come within the category of prohibited economic operators identified in Regulation (EU) No 833/2014 of 31 July 2014 (as amended by EU Regulation 2022/576) and (iv) that the origin of goods, if any, are not subject to the prohibitions set out in Regulation (EU) No 833/2014 (as amended by EU Regulation 2022/576 or any subsequent amendments to same) then it shall be excluded from further participation in this Competition.

If a Tenderer does not, upon request by the Contracting Authority, provide evidence which is considered by the Contracting Authority as sufficient to demonstrate (i) the fulfilment by any Subcontractor on whose capacity the Prime Contractor relies of the Selection Criteria (or any one of them) in accordance with this RFT and (ii) the absence of Exclusion Grounds in respect of any Subcontractor, or the reliability of any Subcontractor despite the existence of a relevant Exclusion Ground and (iii) that any proposed Subcontractor on whose capacity the Tenderer relies (where the value of that subcontract exceeds 10% of the value of the Services Contract) does not come within the category of prohibited economic operators identified in Regulation (EU) No 833/2014 of 31 July 2014 (as amended by EU Regulation 2022/576) then, it shall be excluded from further participation in this Competition unless it replaces the Subcontractor with one which meets all relevant requirements of this RFT.	
Tax compliance, Financial Capacity and Insurances	
Tax compliance	Confirmation that the tenderer / all parties associated with the tenderer are fully tax compliant must be provided in the TRD.
Insurance	Confirmation that the following insurances will be held for the duration of the agreement must be provided in the TRD: - Employer's Liability - €13 million - Public Liability - €6.5 million - Professional Indemnity - €1 million

4.4 Technical Capacity Requirements

Tenderers are required to provide information in the Tender Response Document. The criteria and rules outlined below are assessed on a pass/fail basis. Failure to comply with the requirements will result in the tender being considered inadmissible.

Required Personnel Capacity – Pass/Fail
Tenderers are required to confirm the following in the TRD: Confirm the ability to commence the project in at the start of February 2026 and commit resources for duration of the project.
Previous Contracts / Experience – Pass/Fail
Tenderers must provide information clearly demonstrating successful delivery of three (3) comparable projects within the past five (5) years, involving management of projects of a similar scale and complexity to the Grants Management System. The contracts referenced for consideration should provide comprehensive information to enable the Contracting Authority to determine their comparability to the requirements of this contract and to demonstrate the firm's skills, efficiency, experience and reliability in the relevant areas of expertise. Notes: All fields in the TRD should be completed in full. In the event that the information requested on the value of contracts or identity of clients is considered confidential, tenderers must ensure that

they provide sufficient information to allow the Contracting Authority to judge the similarity of these contracts to the services required.

- In completing the table for each reference project, Tenderers must provide sufficient information to allow the Contracting Authority to evaluate whether all of the requirements at above have been met and whether the services have been successfully delivered.
- Where the tenderer is a grouping relying on the resources of others to meet the previous experience requirement, one of the projects must be from the 3rd party identified in the TRD.
- Tenderers will note that they are to provide contact details for referees for each reference project. The Contracting Authority has the right to contact the referees to verify the information being provided, without further reference to the Tenderer. It is the responsibility of Tenderers to satisfy themselves that the nominated contact person is in a position to provide a reference if contacted by the Contracting Authority. Tenderers should note that the Contracting Authority may at its discretion contact all referees or referees for the successful Tenderers only. Tenderers must note that this is a pass/fail criterion and the Contracting Authority may deem a tender inadmissible based on the feedback received from the referees indicated in the submission, where applicable.

5 AWARD CRITERIA

Only tenders that meet the Selection Criteria and are confirmed as valid and responsive to the specifications set out in this document will be evaluated against the award criteria. Tenderers should ensure that they have submitted sufficient relevant information to allow their tenders to be assessed under each of the award criteria set out below.

The framework will be awarded on the basis of the most economically advantageous compliant tender taking into account the following award criteria and weightings. Tenderers should note that the qualitative award criteria are assessed first.

Criterion A		Weighting	Maximum Marks	Minimum Marks Required 60%
Technical Merit of Proposed Team		40%	4,000	2,400
Description	Tenderers will be evaluated on the capability of the proposed resources to deliver the HRB's requirements as described in this RFT. - Tenderers must provide evidence of their proposed resources' expertise and experience in providing similar services. The Resource Profile in Section 4 of the TRD is to be completed. - Tenderers must also demonstrate the resource's understanding of grant management systems and complex workflows for each resource.			
Criterion B		Weighting	Maximum Marks	Minimum Marks Required 60%
Data Migration		10%	1,000	600
Description	Tenderers must demonstrate their experience with the co-ordination and management of data migration.			
Criterion C		Weighting	Maximum Marks	Minimum Marks Required 60%
Continuity of Service		10%	1,000	600
Description	Tenderers must demonstrate their plan for continuity of service. Tenderers are to provide details or arrangements for any unforeseen changes in resources dedicated to the project.			

Criterion D		Weighting	Maximum Marks	Minimum Marks Required 60%
Proposed Methodology		10%	1,000	600
Description	Tenderers must provide details of their proposed methodology for the implementation phase of the Grants Management system as outlined in this RFT. Tenderers are to include a Gantt chart of their proposed project plan.			
Criterion E		Weighting	Maximum Marks	Minimum Marks Required 60%
Environmental, Social and Sustainability		5%	500	300
Description	Tenderers must detail how they as an organisation meet green public procurement requirements in relation to the provision of the service.			
Criterion F		Weighting	Maximum Marks	Minimum Marks 60%
Cost		25%	2,500	N/A
Description	Tenderers are required to submit a single fixed daily rate price. The estimated period of time is set out in this RFT. All costs must be quoted in Euro (€), exclusive of VAT. The costs specified shall include any and all expenses incurred by the Contractor, its employees, servants and agents in the performance of the Services.			

Tenderers should ensure in their tender submission that they provide detailed information in respect of all aspects of the contract award criteria as stated above. This will enable the awarding authority to assess fully the extent of their offers.

5.1 Methodology for Calculating the Cost Score

The following formula will be applied to the cost score:

The lowest cost tender that also meets all the minimum requirements of the qualitative award criteria will receive the maximum score achievable under this criterion. The scores of the other valid tenders will be calculated using the following formula:

Lowest Cost from a Bona Fide Tender	A
Maximum Marks available for Cost	B
Cost for the tender being evaluated	C
Formula employed	$\frac{A \times B}{C}$

5.2 Methodology for Calculating Scoring of Qualitative Criteria

Score	Meaning	Interpretation
90 – 100%	Outstanding	An outstanding response demonstrating extensive understanding offering full assurance to client – fully supported with no reservations.
80 – <90%	Excellent	An excellent response demonstrating excellent understanding offering assurance to client – fully supported.
70 – <80%	Very good	A very good response demonstrating very good understanding offering assurance to client – strongly supported.
65 – <70%	Good	A good response demonstrating good understanding offering assurance to client – well supported.
60 – <65%	Acceptable	An acceptable response demonstrating a minimum understanding offering assurance to client - satisfactorily supported.
Less than 60% is unacceptable		

Note: where there is a tie-break, the economic operator with the highest quality score will be awarded the quotation. In a case where the overall qualitative scores are identical the economic operator with the highest score on the highest weighted qualitative criterion will be awarded the quotation.

All information regarding the evaluation process or potential outcomes shall remain confidential until after the conclusion of the tender process.

5.3 Post Tender Clarification

At the discretion of the Contracting Authority, tenderers may be invited, in writing, to clarify certain aspects of their tender, particularly where information or documentation to be submitted appears to be incomplete or erroneous. However, all such requests will be made in full compliance with the principles of equal treatment and transparency and avoid any distortion of competition.

5.4 Verification

Award of contract/membership of the framework may be subject to attendance at a verification meeting. It would be essential that the key personnel assigned to this framework should be available and present at this meeting. If required, tenderers will be notified of the date, time, agenda and format for such meetings as soon as possible.

A visit to the Tenderer's premises may be required to clarify any questions or queries regarding the tender offer.

5.5 Clarification of Abnormally Low Tenders

If the Contracting Authority considers the tender submission to be commercially unsustainable or otherwise problematic considering the tendered price or any other financial matter (including proposed indicative hours), the tenderer shall be invited to provide clarification to the Contracting Authority in respect of all elements of the tender submission that the Contracting Authority deems relevant. Any failure to satisfactorily comply with such a request, or to satisfactorily address the Contracting Authority's concerns, may, at the discretion of the Contracting Authority, result in the elimination of the tender in question on the basis of it being considered abnormally low.

5.6 Right to Confirm Suitability

Tenderers should note that the Contracting Authority reserves the right to confirm that the financial and technical capacity of the tenderer is valid and unchanged prior to the establishment of the framework and the award of any contract.

6 INSTRUCTIONS FOR TENDERERS

6.1 Submission of Tenders

The Contracting Authority is using the Tender Postbox facility and tenders must be submitted electronically via the eTenders postbox facility on www.etenders.gov.ie only. Only Tenders submitted to the electronic postbox will be accepted. Tenders submitted by any other means (including but not limited to by email, fax, post or hand delivery) will **not** be accepted.

Tenderers must ensure that they give themselves enough time to upload and submit all required documentation before the closing date/time noting the use of the eTenders platform. Tenderers should consider the fact that upload speeds vary. In order to submit a response to the electronic post-box, please note that you must ensure you have submitted the response completely. It is advisable to familiarise yourself with the platform prior to the closing date.

Below we provide an overview of the key steps. Please note that the Contracting Authority take no responsibility for these steps being the totality of the steps required as different processes may require different actions.

If in doubt, please ensure you contact the eTenders helpdesk as follows:

Email: irish-eproc-helpdesk@eurodyn.com

Phone: +353-818001459

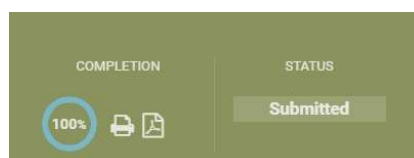
Accessing Documents

It is important to note that you must **ASSOCIATE** your company with this competition in the first instance. To do this you must do the following:

- (a) Log-in to the system
- (b) Locate the competition using the Advanced Search by Contracting Authority or Resource ID
- (c) Click on the hyperlink for the competition which will bring you to the CfT Workspace
- (d) In the Show CfT Menu for the competition click on the “Expression of Interest” in the drop-down menu
- (e) Complete the “Association with the CfT” tab.
- (f) This will then provide you with a link to “Tender” under the Show CfT Menu

Submitting your Response

In responding to a competition without an electronic ESPD, a number of steps are required. The final step involves clicking on a Submit button and receiving the following status:



If you do not receive a message similar to above and a confirmation email, you have not submitted your response.

Please note that the screen may say **OFFLINE**, this is a technical feature of eTenders and does not mean you cannot submit. Also please note you may see the percentage field also saying 100% before you submit, this still requires you to go through the submit button.

Please upload your response as a **ZIP FILE** to protect the integrity of the file names.

It is the responsibility of the Tenderer to ensure that their tender is complete and is uploaded in accordance with the instructions provided on eTenders prior to the deadline as per the front page.

6.2 Checklist for Submission of Tenders

Tenderers are advised to check that they have included the following items in their submission:

1. Tender Response Document
2. Appendix 1 – Draft Framework Agreement Terms and Conditions
3. Appendix 2 – Draft Call-Off Contract
4. ESPD Template

6.3 Closing date for Tenders

The closing date for tender submission	as per etenders
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It is the responsibility of the tenderer to ensure that their tender is complete and is uploaded / submitted by the designated deadline.

6.4 Queries

The closing date for submitting queries	as per etenders
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All queries regarding this tender should be submitted through the messaging facility on www.etenders.gov.ie, including any omissions which would prevent tenderers from submitting a comprehensive tender. Please submit queries as soon as possible and before the query closing date. The Contracting Authority is not obliged to respond to questions received after this date.

In circulating responses, queries will be edited to avoid disclosing the identity of the querist and will be circulated to all parties who have expressed an interest in the procurement on the eTenders website.

6.5 Extension of Tender Period

The Contracting Authority reserves the right, at its sole discretion, to extend the closing date for receipt of tenders by giving notice in writing (by post or electronic means) to all parties who have expressed an interest in the notice via eTenders no later than six days before the original closing date.

6.6 Tender Validity Period

To allow sufficient time for Tender assessment a Tender Validity period of 6 months is required, this period commencing on the closing date by which the Tenders are to be returned.

6.7 Discrepancies between Documents

A pdf version of the Request for Tender has been made available on eTenders. This document will be considered as the primary source document in this procurement process, word versions of documents where they are provided are being made available to assist tenderers in responding to the tender competition. Where there is a discrepancy between a pdf version and a word version, the pdf version will take precedence. Tenderers are requested to notify the Contracting Authority immediately of any anomaly. Where applicable the Contracting Authority will issue amended versions.

6.8 Formatting of Tenders / Amending Tender Documents

Tenderers must ensure they use the Tender Response Document (TRD) when preparing their submission.

Tenderers are prohibited from amending any text or content of forms or declarations or templates provided as part of this tender competition in their tender responses, unless directed otherwise. Where amendments have been identified, the Contracting Authority may at its discretion eliminate the tenderer from further consideration. Likewise, failure to use the template documentation provided particularly in relation to costing / pricing may result in tenders being eliminated.

6.9 Collusive Tendering

If any Tendering Party is found to have, at any time, offered to give or to have agreed to offer or give to any person, any bribe, gift, gratuity, commission or consideration of any kind as an inducement or reward for taking or forbearing to take any action in relation to the obtaining of its Tenders, or for showing or forbearing to show any favour or disfavour to any person in relation to its Tenders, the bid submitted by such Tendering Party shall be automatically disqualified and the circumstances surrounding such action shall be referred to the appropriate authority.

6.10 Confidentiality

After the official opening of Tenders, information relating to the examination, clarification, evaluation and comparison of Tenders and recommendations will not be disclosed to tenderers or other persons not officially concerned with such process until the award decision with the successful Tenderer has been announced and in conformity with national laws.

Tenderers shall treat the details of all documents supplied to them in connection with this contract as private and confidential and shall not disclose the contents to a third party without the permission of the Contracting Authority.

Any effort by the Tenderer to influence the Contracting Authority or their staff in the process of examination, clarification, evaluation and comparison of Tenders and in decisions concerning the award of the contract may result in the rejection of that Tender.

6.11 Clarification of Tenders

The Contracting Authority is entitled, but not obliged, to seek clarification of tenders, including pricing breakdowns in the course of the evaluation process. No change in the price or substance of the Tender shall be sought, offered or permitted. To assist in finalising the tender evaluation, selected tenderers may be invited to attend clarification meetings with the Contracting Authority.

Tenderers will be responsible for any costs incurred by them in the event that they are required to attend clarification or other meetings or make a presentation of their proposals.

6.12 Correction of errors

Detailed pricing of all tenders will be examined for errors that might alter the tender pricing as determined from the figures on the Form of Tender and electronic versions of the tender (if applicable). In general, the following approach will be applied to manifest errors - where there is a discrepancy between the unit price and the total amount derived from the multiplication of the unit price and the quantity, the unit price as quoted will normally govern.

The amount stated in the tender form will be adjusted by the Contracting Authority in accordance with the above procedure and, with the agreement of the tenderer, shall be considered as binding upon the tenderer. Without prejudice to the above, a tenderer not accepting the correction of their tender as outlined may have their tender rejected.

Where the Total Quote function has been activated on eTenders and a discrepancy arises between the amount in the Total Quote box and the tender submission, the amount in the tender submission shall take precedence.

Once the tender submission deadline has expired, no new information can be introduced. This includes cost elements.

6.13 Change in the composition of a Tenderer

Where a change in composition of a tenderer arises, this must be notified in writing to the Contracting Authority and formally approved by them. Where the original party to the tender was critical to the tenderer meeting some or all selection criteria, any replacement party must meet or exceed the same selection criteria standard.

The Contracting Authority reserves the right, but is not obliged, to disqualify any Tenderer that makes any change to its composition after submission of a Tender.

6.14 Interference and Inducement to Purchase

Any effort by the tenderer to unduly influence the Contracting Authority, relevant agency personnel or any other relevant persons or bodies in the process of examination, clarification, evaluation and comparison of tenders and in decisions concerning the Award of Contract shall have their tender rejected. The presumptions (including as to any gift, consideration or advantage) and other provisions under the Criminal Justice Act 2018, and all other measures for the time being governing the subject-matter in any applicable jurisdiction, shall be applicable.

6.15 Conflict of Interest

Any conflict of interest involving a tenderer (or tenderers in the event of a consortium bid) must be fully disclosed to the Contracting Authority. Any registrable interest involving the tenderer and the Contracting Authority or employees of the Contracting Authority or their relatives must be fully disclosed in the tender submission or should be communicated to the Contracting Authority immediately upon such information becoming known to the tenderer, in the event of this information only coming to their notice after the submission of a bid and prior to the award of the contract. Failure to disclose a conflict of interest may disqualify a tenderer or invalidate an award of contract, depending on when the conflict of interest comes to light.

6.16 Publicity

Tenderers shall not undertake (or permit to be undertaken) at any time, whether at this stage or after the award of the contract, any publicity activity with any section of the media in relation to this tender/agreement other than with the prior written consent of the Contracting Authority. Such consent shall extend to the content of any publicity. For the purposes of this paragraph, the word “media” includes (but is not limited to) radio, television, newspapers, trade and specialist press, the Internet and email, accessible by the public at large and the representatives of such media.

The Contracting Authority will have the right to publicise or otherwise disclose to any third-party information regarding this process and the agreement.

6.17 Right Not to Award

The Contracting Authority does not bind itself to accept the most economically advantageous tender or any tender. It also reserves the right to accept or reject in whole or in part any or all tenders received, and, in particular, to source the requirement with more than one provider.

The invitation to tender is issued in good faith; however, the Contracting Authority at its sole discretion shall not be obliged to award a contract or proceed to further stages in the procurement process and reserves the right to cancel the procurement process.

6.18 Notification of Tender Evaluations

All information regarding the evaluation process or potential outcomes shall remain confidential until after the conclusion of the tender process.

All tenderers will be informed of the outcome of their tenders following tender evaluation and any necessary clarifications.

Potential outcomes can be:

- Establishment of the Framework/Award of Contract
- Letter of Regret
- Decision not to proceed with the establishment of the Framework

6.19 Award Notices

Following the conclusion of the framework, an award notice will be dispatched to eTenders announcing the results of the competition.

6.20 Policy on Personal Debriefings

Based on the provision of the information to unsuccessful tenderers as outlined above and due to resourcing constraints, the Contracting Authority will not be offering individual debriefing meetings to unsuccessful bidders.

6.21 Copyright

Unless otherwise agreed, the Contracting Authority will have copyright ownership of any material developed for use by the Contracting Authority under the terms of this tender. The service provider may have a non-exclusive license to use such material but only for its own purposes (to be agreed with the successful tenderer).

6.22 Brand Names, etc.

Please note in relation to this tender document; where reference is made to a particular make, source, process, trademark, type or patent, that this is not to be regarded as a de facto requirement. In all such cases it should be understood that the reference in question is accompanied by the words "or equivalent".

6.23 Environmental Aspects

The Contracting Authority is committed to the principles of environmental management in its activities, and it encourages the implementation of sustainability principles in its procurement practices. Tenderers/contractors should make all reasonable efforts to minimise adverse environmental impact in the methods of service delivery and in materials used.

6.24 Knowledge and Skills Transfer

It will be a condition of the contract that opportunities for the transfer of skills and/or knowledge from the Tender/Tender's staff to the Contracting Authority staff will be availed of during the course of contracts under the framework agreement.

6.25 Currency and Payments

The currency in which all prices and rates shall be tendered, and which payments under the contract will be paid, shall be Euro (€). All prices and rates quoted should be exclusive of VAT, with the applicable rate of VAT clearly indicated.

A schedule of payments will be agreed with the successful tenderer and invoices shall be submitted in accordance with the terms agreed with the Contracting Authority.

6.26 Irish Legislation and Law

Tenderers should be aware that national legislation applies in other matters such as Employment, Working Hours, Official Secrets, Data Protection and Health and Safety. Tenderers must have regard to statutory terms relating to minimum pay and to legally binding industrial or sectoral agreements in the Contracting Authority tenders and in delivering contracts awarded to them. The contract(s) awarded on foot of this tender process will be governed by Irish law.

6.27 Anti-Competitive Conduct

Tenderers should take notice of the Competition Act 2002 (as amended, the “2002 Act”), which makes it a criminal offence for tenderers to collude on prices or any other aspects relating to this procurement competition.

6.28 Accessibility / Dignity at Work

The successful tenderer(s) shall comply with all relevant legislation relating to dignity at work. As a public body and employer, the Contracting Authority is committed to a policy of equality of opportunity for all personnel.

In line with the Disability Act 2005, accessibility requirements should be clearly stated in request for tenders / quotations where applicable. Under Section 27 of the Act the Contracting Authority is required to ensure that both the goods supplied, and services provided to it are accessible to persons with disabilities.

6.29 Withholding Tax

Where applicable, payments shall be subject to Irish ‘Professional Services Withholding Tax’ at the prevailing rate (currently at 20%) as laid down by the Revenue Commissioners in Ireland. Non-residents may be able to reclaim such deducted Tax from the Office of the Revenue Commissioners in Ireland, International Claims Section located currently at Government Buildings, Nenagh, Co. Tipperary, Ireland (Tel: +353 (0) 67 63400).

6.30 Freedom of Information

All responses to this Request for Tender will be treated in confidence and no information contained therein will be communicated to any third party without the written permission of the tenderer except insofar as is specifically required for the consideration and evaluation of the response or as may be required under law, including the Freedom of Information Act 2014, EU and Irish Government Procurement Procedures, or in response to questions, debates or other parliamentary procedures in or of the Oireachtas (the Irish Parliament).

Tenderers are asked to consider if any of the information supplied by them in response to this request for tenders should not be disclosed because of its sensitivity. However, any blanket or all-encompassing request for exemption from disclosure is not acceptable; tenderers must identify explicitly any such information and give relevant reasons for considering it to be economically sensitive or confidential in nature. If this is the case, tenderers should specify the information that is sensitive and the reasons for its sensitivity. The Contracting Authority cannot guarantee that any information provided by tenderers, either in response to this tender or in the course of any contract awarded as a result thereof, will not be released pursuant to the Contracting Authority’s obligations under law, including the Freedom of

Information Act 2014, or to those under EU and Irish Government Procurement rules. The Contracting Authority accepts no liability whatsoever in respect of any information provided which is subsequently released, or in respect of any consequential damage suffered as a result of such disclosure.

6.31 Late Payment

The Contracting Authority operates in accordance with EU Directive 2011/7/EU on combating Late Payment in commercial Transactions transposed into national legislation as S.I. 580 of 2012 and amended by S.I. No. 281 of 2016.

6.32 Data Protection

“Data Protection Laws” means all applicable national and EU data protection laws, regulations and guidelines including but not limited to Regulation (EU) 2016/679 on the protection of natural persons with regard to the processing of personal data and on the free movement of such data, and repealing Directive 95/46/EC (the “General Data Protection Regulation”), the Data Protection Act, 2018 and any guidelines and codes of practice issued by the Data Protection Commission or other supervisory authority for data protection in Ireland from time to time.

The Contracting Authority will be a Controller (where Controller has the meaning given under the Data Protection Laws) in respect of any Personal Data (where Personal Data has the meaning given under the Data Protection Laws) required to be provided by the Tenderer in response to this Request for Tender.

The Tenderer, as Controller in respect of any Personal Data provided by it in its Tender, is required to confirm by way of statement in the “Declarations” section of the accompanying Tender Response Document that all Data Subjects (where Data Subject has the meaning given under the Data Protection Laws) whose Personal Data is provided by the Tenderer have consented to the processing of such Personal Data by the Tenderer, the Contracting Authority, the Evaluation Team and the supplier of the eTenders website, for the purposes of the participation of the Tenderer in this Competition or that the Tenderer otherwise has a legal basis for providing such Personal Data to the Contracting Authority for the purposes of its participation in this Competition.

6.33 Changes in Legislation

As a condition of award, it shall be the sole responsibility of the tenderer (in the event of success in this competition) to fulfil the obligations under the Contract.

6.34 International Procurement Instrument-IPI

The Contracting Authority would refer Tenderers in particular to the provisions of Regulation (EU) 2022/1031 on the access of third country economic operators, goods and services to the Union’s public procurement and concession markets and procedures supporting negotiations on access of Union economic operators, goods and services to the public procurement and concession markets of third countries (International Procurement Instrument – IPI), and to their obligation to comply therewith. In particular, tenderers and candidates should note in Article 6 of Regulation (EU) 2022/1031, the obligations for a Contracting Authority in the context of a procurement procedure where the EU Commission has adopted an IPI measure.

6.35 Responsibility of Successful Party

As a condition of award, it shall be the successful tenderer's sole responsibility to ensure they have taken account of all obligations under the Contract including supply chain and related risk factors.