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Issue: 5	9301 – Qualification System for Professional Services	Date: January 2026

Question No	Question	Query date	Response
1	We kindly request confirmation as to whether it would be permissible to submit the documentation for the prequalification phase after the deadline of 12/02/2026 ("3.4 PROPOSED TIMESCALE AND ANTICIPATED PROGRAMME-FIRST RETURN OF COMPLETED PQQs").	13/01/2026	The Qualification System (QS) remains open to new applicants for the duration of the QS. Therefore, you may submit your application even after the stated deadline. However, should a requirement arise, only applicants who are already appointed to the QS at that time will be invited.
2	We would like to confirm whether, once a company has been individually prequalified and is eligible to participate in a "Call-Off", it may form a consortium with other companies that are prequalified under the Qualification System and/or with companies that did not participate in the prequalification phase.	13/01/2026	Flexibility can be provided at the call-off tender stage to allow suppliers to partner with other suppliers. However, any change in status would require a new PQQ submission and reassessment by IE.
3	We would like to confirm whether the project value indicated in the references required under "TECHNICAL/PROFESSIONAL ABILITY" refers to the total CAPEX or construction cost of the project, rather than the contract value of the applicant consultant.	13/01/2026	The value indicated relates to the total CAPEX of the project. Not all projects involve construction.
4	Considering the breadth of the Lots and the associated Areas of Expertise over the 5 year duration of the QS, will Irish Rail allow Candidates to partner for a particular award stage if those candidates have all prequalified for the relevant Lot and Area of Expertise? If this is not allowed, are the teams, either Consortia or Prime and Sub relationships not allowed to be changed post the PQQ process?	13/01/2026	Flexibility can be provided at the call-off tender stage to allow suppliers to partner with other suppliers. However, any change in status would require a new PQQ submission and reassessment by IE.
5	Can teams be supplemented by the addition of Sub Consultants during the award stage if they satisfy the PQQ requirements for a Sub-Consultant?	13/01/2026	Flexibility can be provided at the call-off tender stage to allow suppliers to partner with other suppliers. However, any change in status would require a new PQQ submission and reassessment by IE.
6	The minimum revenue requirements in Part 2 of the questionnaire appear excessive. Can you please consider reducing these requirements to reflect the nature of the works? We would suggest a requirement of €3m for Lot 3 tenderers.	13/01/2026	IE has carefully considered this matter and confirms that the minimum revenue requirements will remain unchanged. These requirements have been determined as proportionate and appropriate, having regard to the scale, complexity, and risk profile of the services to be delivered

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			under Lot 3, and are intended to ensure that tenderers have the necessary financial capacity to perform the contract.
7	Can you please confirm whether there is flexibility for companies to team only on specific areas of expertise? E.g. can two companies join together for some areas of expertise, and tender alone for others?	13/01/2026	Flexibility can be provided at the call-off tender stage to allow suppliers to partner with other suppliers. However, any change in status would require a new PQQ submission and reassessment by IE.
8	Is it acceptable for a QS and PM consultant to complete the PQQ or do we have to be part of an Architectural Led Team (as per page 6 point 2 Architectural Design Services)	13/01/2026	A QS and PM consultant may complete and submit the PQQ provided that the applicant independently satisfies all the minimum requirements set out in the PQQ, including the required minimum turnover, and the required level of relevant experience in line with the scope of services.
9	We note from the table (in Part 1/ pages 5-11 of the PQQ) that each “Area of Expertise” has a number of professional services’ sub-requirements listed (by bullet) under the “Brief Description” column . Can IE confirm if there’s an expectation (or requirement) that an applicant applying for/ appointed to the QS (i.e. Candidates) for a specific Area of Expertise, would have the ability to provide all of the professional service listed under each Area of Expertise or if it would be acceptable that applicants would provide just some of these professional services listed (for the relevant Area of Expertise) being submitted for?	13/01/2026	IE can confirm that it is not expected nor required that an applicant has experience across all of the bullet point services listed under the area of expertise. The bullet points are intended to be indicative of the range of services that may be required within each Area of Expertise. Applicants are expected to demonstrate the required level of relevant experience within the overall Area of Expertise, showing experience in some of the listed professional services, rather than all of them. Accordingly, applications will be assessed on the basis of the applicant’s ability to demonstrate appropriate and relevant experience that, taken as a whole, aligns with the Area of Expertise being applied for.
10	We note in section 5.3 of the PQQ that you have stated that “Project reference provided must have been finalized. On going projects reference will not be acceptable and will be deemed unacceptable”. Can IE please confirm if this refers to client engagements (i.e. a discrete piece of work/ services relating to a project/ scheme) which must have been finalised or if this relates to projects/ schemes (which must have been finalised/	13/01/2026	IE confirms that the requirement in Section 5.3 of the PQQ relates to the completion of the relevant client engagement and project phase, rather than the overall completion of the entire project or scheme. It is acceptable for applicants to use a project reference where subsequent phases of the project or scheme are still ongoing, provided

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	completed)? For example if an applicant had provided relevant professional services to a client on a specific project/ scheme which is still in planning/ procurement/ construction, etc., would this mean that any client engagement experience relating to that project/ scheme could not be used? If this was the case, it would seem overly onerous/ exclusionary given the applicants would have completed their client engagements (and demonstrated relevant experience) despite the ongoing nature of the project/ scheme which can take years/ decades to complete and finalise.		that the phase and associated activities used as evidence are fully complete and fall within the stipulated 10-year timeframe.
11	Could the CA please confirm if PQQ's must be submitted by the 12th February or that PQQ's can be submitted at any time between 12th February 2026 and 1st March 2030	13/01/2026	The Qualification System (QS) remains open to new applicants for the duration of the QS. Therefore, you may submit your application even after the stated deadline. However, should a requirement arise, only applicants who are already appointed to the QS at that time will be invited.
12	Can you please advise the estimated total value of works awarded under each lot over the period of the Qualification System?	13/01/2026	At this stage, it is not possible to provide an estimated total value of works to be awarded under each Lot over the period of the Qualification System, as the nature, scale, and timing of future requirements are not yet known. However, call-off competitions will be issued in accordance with the Lot structure and associated value thresholds. Requirements with an estimated value below €1m will be competed among tenderers approved under Lot 1, while requirements with an estimated value exceeding €10m will be competed among tenderers approved under Lot 3.
13	Can you please advise where work will be delivered from, in Client premisses (Irish Rail offices) or from remote location?	13/01/2026	This will depend on the nature of each individual requirement and the relevant Lot. As such, it is not possible to provide a definitive answer at this stage.

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14	Can you please advise if there is a limit on the number of suppliers per lot?	13/01/2026	No, there is no limit on the number of tenderers per lot.
15	Can you please advise how opportunities will be packaged and advertised. For example... if an opportunity needs capabilities from say 4 categories, but a party has only qualified for 2 of those categories, would it be advertised so all parties can see it and therefore look to form a team with another party from the framework in order to jointly meet the requirements of the opportunity? Or would only parties who qualified across all those required categories see the opportunity and be able to respond?	13/01/2026	As set out in the PQQ document, where a requirement requires professional services across multiple <i>Areas of Expertise</i> , IÉ reserves the right to select applicants approved in one or more of the applicable areas.
16	Can the Contracting Authority kindly confirm that no eESPD needs to be submitted?	15/01/2026	No need to submit ESPD, the PQQ application is a substitute for it.
17	The PQQ includes a section for ECONOMIC AND FINANCIAL CAPACITY under the Selection Criteria. ¹² However, Appendix 1, Part 3 is titled "Economic and Financial Capacity Selection Criteria (and Reliance on Resources if applicable)" is explicitly marked as N/A. Can the Contracting Authority kindly confirm that no financial documents are required to be submitted at this pre-qualification stage?	15/01/2026	Turnover is addressed in Part 2 of the PQQ, and all applicants are required to provide evidence of the requested turnover in order to be accepted onto the QS.
18	Could you please confirm the process for the Tender. Is this a single stage process based on the PQQ only or will there be a follow up ITT?	15/01/2026	A Qualification System operates by pre-approving vendors for future call-offs under the QS. When a requirement arises, the ITT stage of the procurement process will be run, and only tenderers approved under the QS will be invited to participate. In response to your question, this is not a single-stage process based solely on the PQQ; a follow-up ITT will be issued for each specific requirement.
19	Could you please confirm whether projects delivered as part of a joint venture can be submitted as reference projects if we are applying as a single entity rather than as a JV, consortium, or	15/01/2026	Projects delivered as part of a joint venture may be submitted as reference projects where the applicant is applying as a single entity, provided that the applicant can clearly demonstrate its specific role,

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	similar arrangement? If this is permitted, is there a requirement to demonstrate a minimum level of involvement in delivering the relevant expertise?		scope of services, and level of involvement in the delivery of the project. The reference must be relevant to the expertise being assessed, and the applicant should ensure that their contribution is clearly evidenced.
20	For the purposes of lot application, should the full project CAPEX be stated, or should it be proportionate to the scope of work undertaken by the Applicant?	15/01/2026	The full value of the project should be stated.
21	We note that for our case studies, they must have been completed within the past 10 years. Would it be possible to include long-standing multi-year projects, where we have already delivered a significant amount of the commission?	22/01/2026	As per question 11, IÉ confirms that the requirement in Section 5.3 of the PQQ relates to the completion of the relevant client engagement and project phase, rather than the overall completion of the entire project or scheme. It is acceptable for applicants to use a project reference where subsequent phases of the project or scheme are still ongoing, <u>provided that the phase and associated activities used as evidence are fully complete and fall within the stipulated 10-year timeframe.</u>
22	Please confirm if we will be allowed to use our 2024, 2023 and 2022 audited financial statements since our 2025 and 2026 audited statements aren't available yet.	22/01/2026	We confirm we accept financial statements from years 2022, 2023 and 2024.
23	In Section 5.3 – Technical/Professional Ability and Part 4 of Appendix 1, the PQQ states that “the written submission shall be of no more than 3 A4 pages (minimum font size 10)”, while also requiring Applicants to provide three reference contracts per Area of Expertise. To ensure clear and complete evidence of the required experience (noting that there are multiple sub-requirements in each Area of Expertise), could IÉ please consider increasing the relevant page count so that each written submission (for each Area of Expertise and relevant Lot) shall be no more than 6 A4 pages (and no more than two (2) pages per reference contract)?	22/01/2026	IÉ confirms that the page limit can be increased to 2 pages per reference.

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24	Would it be possible for IE to share the draft framework agreement?	22/01/2026	This is a PQQ for a Qualification System, which means that a pool of suppliers will be pre approved for future competitions. There is no framework nor contract at this stage. Each future call off/competition will have their own type of contract, and contract conditions.
25	Is it acceptable for an applicant to submit a PQQ response in their own right while also appearing as a sub-contractor in the submission of another applicant?	22/01/2026	Yes, this is acceptable. An applicant may submit a PQQ response in their own right and may also appear as a sub-contractor in the submission of another applicant. Each submission will be evaluated independently on its own merits, in accordance with the requirements of the PQQ.
26	Can you please confirm that you are looking for each case study within an area of expertise to be only 1 page long so the whole area of expertise submission is only 3 pages long or should each case study be 3 pages long with the whole area of expertise submission being 9 pages long.	22/01/2026	As per question 22 above, page limit has been increased to 2 pages per reference, totalling 6 pages per area of expertise.
27	Per page 18 of the PQQ "FORMAT OF PQQ SUBMISSIONS AND RETURN OF PQQ" Part 7, Health and Safety is noted as not applicable however Part 7 is outlined for completion on page 33. Can you please confirm that page 33 does not need to be completed.	27/01/2026	IE confirm that Part 7 is linked to criterion 3, and applicants should fill this part out. PQQ has been amended to reflect such change.
28	Could you please clarify the specific meaning of the category "Details of contract performance" that is listed in the Reference Sheet? Is there a difference between the "Name of client contact" and "Contact Name" within the client contact details?	27/01/2026	The category "Details of contract performance" is intended to capture information on how the contract was delivered in practice, beyond a description of the contractual obligations. It may include any relevant information relating to the delivery and performance of the contract that the IE may consider when evaluating the submission. This can include, but is not limited to, outcomes achieved, performance against programme and budget, achievement of key milestones, quality of delivery, lessons learned, and any performance measures or KPIs where applicable.

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			Tenderers should also identify any elements of the contract that were sub-contracted, including the nature of those services and the role of the sub-contractor. Regarding client contact details: “Name of client contact” and “Contact Name” refer to the same individual and can be completed with the details of the primary client representative who can act as a reference for the contract.
29	Project reference value for Lots 1 and 2	03/02/2026	2 clarifications have been added to the selection criteria “ Relevant Experience of Applicant” for lots 1 and 2: Lot1: Clarification: Projects that exceeds €1M may also be submitted and will be deemed acceptable for this Lot. Lot2: Clarification: Projects that exceeds €10M may also be submitted and will be deemed acceptable for this Lot.
30	What is the minimum level of expertise and the minimum number of lots that an applicant is permitted to tender for?	03/02/2026	The minimum number of areas and lots an applicant may apply for is one, and there is no maximum number of lots. Please note that if an applicant gets approved for lot 3, they are automatically approved for lots 1 and 2.
31	Please can we have confirmation that the project value indicated in the references required under "TECHNICAL/PROFESSIONAL ABILITY" refers to the total value of the project ie the Client value, rather than the contract value of the applicant. ie overall project value verses contract value of the applicant	03/02/2026	Confirmed, the total value of the project is the project value, not the client value.
32	Please can Irish Rail confirm whether it is acceptable when applying for Lot 1 to have a reference in which the contract value to the applicant was greater than 1Million Euro for one of the three reference, the other two references for the discipline area being less than 1 million Euro.	03/02/2026	All three references' project value must be equal or greater than the value stipulated for each lot.

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33	Please can Irish Rail confirm whether more than 3 reference project references per Area of Expertise can be submitted, provided the page count of overall 6 pages of A4 is not exceeded and that any one reference doesn't exceed 2 pages	03/02/2026	Only the first 3 project submitted will be used for evaluation.
34	We issue our Health and Safety Statement and Safety Policy as one document. Please confirm if this is acceptable?	03/02/2026	Acceptable
35	Are the case studies to be included within the 2_9301 Reference Sheet, or can they be submitted using our own template in addition to the information provided in the 2_9301 Reference Sheet?	03/02/2026	Please use our reference sheet and the page limit stipulated. See question 26 above.
36	We kindly ask whether a company can use project experiences that were delivered by the parent company, if it is the subsidiary that is bidding for this PQQ? In particular, if it is a case where resources are shared across the legal entities.	03/02/2026	This is allowed, as per section 2 (reliance on resources) of the PQQ.
37	Would you accept 2025 financial information (not audited)? If not, a subsidiary within the same holdings does meet the criteria, so would you accept their financial statements in combination?	03/02/2026	This means you would be relying in the resources of another company, even if from the same holding or parent company – check section 2 of the PQQ. However, as per question 22, IE confirm that we will accept financial statements from years 2022, 2023 and 2024.