



**An Roinn Gnóthaí  
Eachtracha agus Trádála**  
Department of  
Foreign Affairs and Trade

**CFT8418817: Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade - Evaluation Consultancy Services Framework**

**Clarification Questions and Answers – 30<sup>th</sup> June 2026**

| Ref No     | Question                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | Contracting Authority Response                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
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| <b>Q1.</b> | <p><b>Framework operation and call-off mechanism</b></p> <p>The procurement notice, section 5.1.15 “Techniques – Framework agreement”, appears to describe the Framework Agreement as being without reopening of competition.</p> <p>Appendix 5 of the RFT, Article 5 “Procedure for Award of Contracts”, states that on each occasion DFAT proposes to award a contract under the Framework Agreement, DFAT shall issue a Supplementary Request for Tenders to all Framework Members in accordance with a mini-competition procedure. Appendix 5, Article 6, also refers to award criteria for mini-competitions.</p> <p>Could the Contracting Authority please clarify the intended mechanism for awarding contracts</p> | <p>A Change Notice has been issued for publication to amend the reference in Section 5.1.15 (Techniques – Framework Agreement) of the Contract Notice for Lot 1, 2 and 3. The amendment involves changing from “Framework agreement, without reopening of competition” to “Framework agreement, with reopening of competition”</p> <p>The terms of the competition are as set out in the tender documents.</p> <p>All Framework Members will be invited to participate in each mini-competition under their respective Lot.</p> |

| Ref No     | Question                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | Contracting Authority Response                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
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|            | <p>under the Framework Agreement, including whether:</p> <p>a. Contracts will be awarded without reopening competition;</p> <p>b. Contracts will be awarded through Supplementary Requests for Tenders / mini-competitions;</p> <p>c. The mechanism may vary by lot, assignment type, value, urgency or other circumstances; or</p> <p>d. A clarification or amendment will be issued to align the procurement notice and RFT documentation.</p> <p>If Supplementary Requests for Tenders / mini-competitions will apply, could the Contracting Authority also confirm whether all Framework Members appointed to the relevant lot will be invited to each such competition?</p> |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| <b>Q2.</b> | <p><b>Pricing, travel and subsistence</b></p> <p>Appendix 2 states that quoted daily rates should be inclusive of all costs, including travel and subsistence, and also states that the required services will not be delivered in person.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | <p>For the purposes of the proposed Daily Rates, Tenderers are requested to complete the TRD for each Lot tendered for, 'Travel' refers to domestic travel undertaken within the country in which the tenderer resides. Any such domestic travel costs are expected to be included within the proposed professional fee rate.</p> <p><b>International Travel and Subsistence costs associated with the provision of services are not to be included within the proposed Daily Rates.</b></p> |

| Ref No | Question                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | Contracting Authority Response                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
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|        | <p>However, the requirements for Lot 3 indicate that assignments may include a fieldwork component averaging approximately two weeks per project.</p> <p>Could the Contracting Authority please clarify whether tenderers should price on the basis that:</p> <p>a. All services under the Framework Agreement will be delivered remotely and no travel or subsistence costs will arise;</p> <p>b. Fieldwork under Lot 3 may be required in person, where specified in a future Supplementary Request for Tenders;</p> <p>c. Travel, accommodation, subsistence, visas, security-related costs, vaccinations, insurance extensions, local transport, interpretation, venue hire or other fieldwork-related costs should be included in the daily rates submitted at framework stage; or</p> <p>d. Such fieldwork-related costs, where applicable, may be priced separately, reimbursed separately, or specified separately at Supplementary Request for Tenders stage.</p> | <p>All international travel costs, subsistence, and related travel expenses incurred for the purposes of external professional services, subsequent to winning a mini-competition under the applicable Lot, will be payable at normal Irish Government Civil Service Departmental rates (<a href="#">Subsistence Allowances Abroad</a>). Such costs will be discussed and agreed in advance between the winning Tenderer and the Department's contract manager.</p> <p>In particular:</p> <p>a. No. Depending on the Lot and the projects under each, there may be in-person meetings/engagements. Lot 1 projects are expected to be primarily undertaken remotely; Lot 2 projects are expected to have some in-person engagement; and Lot 3 projects are expected to involve travel.</p> <p>b. International fieldwork may be required under Lot 3; however, the international travel and subsistence costs for this travel should not be included in the daily rate.</p> <p>c. Please note above text in <b>bold</b> and subsequent paragraph on International Travel and Subsistence costs. Please see response to Q7 and Q8 regarding travel insurance and other project related costs.</p> <p>d. No; please note above text in <b>bold</b> and subsequent paragraph on International Travel and Subsistence costs.</p> <p>A Tender Amendment Notice will be issued confirming this change.</p> |

| Ref No     | Question                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | Contracting Authority Response                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
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| <b>Q3.</b> | <p><b>Applicability of framework daily rates to future assignments</b></p> <p>Could the Contracting Authority confirm whether the daily rates submitted at framework stage will operate as maximum ceiling rates for all future assignments under the relevant lot?</p> <p>If Supplementary Requests for Tenders / mini-competitions will apply, could the Contracting Authority confirm whether Framework Members may propose assignment-specific rates at that stage, provided they do not exceed the maximum daily rates submitted at the framework stage?</p> | <p>As set out in Appendix 2 (Pricing Schedule) of the RFT and Section 6 (Award Criteria 4) of the TRD, “The quoted rates are the maximum permissible for the term of the framework. Tenderers should note that these rates may be adjusted for inflation only.”</p> <p>Framework members will be permitted at mini-competition stage to submit Daily Fee Rates below the rates quoted at Framework stage.</p> |
| <b>Q4.</b> | <p><b>Evaluation of cost</b></p> <p>The TRD states that the total of the Senior Consultant and Junior Consultant daily rates will be used for evaluation purposes.</p> <p>Could the Contracting Authority confirm whether the Senior Consultant and Junior Consultant rates will be weighted equally for the purposes of the cost evaluation, or whether any weighting will be applied to reflect anticipated usage of senior and junior inputs under each lot?</p>                                                                                               | <p>The Total figure (the daily rate of the Senior Consultant plus the daily rate of the Junior Consultant) will be used for financial evaluation purposes as set out in Section 6 (Award Criteria – Criteria 4) on page 11 of the TRD.</p>                                                                                                                                                                    |
| <b>Q5.</b> | <p><b>Junior Consultant rate</b></p> <p>Could the Contracting Authority confirm whether tenderers must provide a Junior Consultant daily</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | <p>The response provided to Q4 above also applies to Q5.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |

| Ref No     | Question                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | Contracting Authority Response                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
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|            | <p>rate where the tenderer proposes to deliver the relevant lot using only senior personnel?</p> <p>If a Junior Consultant rate is mandatory, could the Contracting Authority confirm whether inclusion of such a rate creates any obligation to provide junior personnel during the framework term?</p>                                                                                                                                                                          |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| <b>Q6.</b> | <p><b>Lot-specific pricing</b></p> <p>Could the Contracting Authority confirm whether the same Senior Consultant and Junior Consultant daily rates must apply across all lots tendered for, or whether tenderers may submit different daily rates for different lots, reflecting the different nature, complexity, risk profile and delivery requirements of each lot?</p>                                                                                                        | <p>There are three individual Lots under this framework. Each Lot will be evaluated separately. Tenderers are required to submit a separate TRD for each Lot tendered for. It is acceptable for Tenderers to propose different rates for each Lot tendered for.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| <b>Q7.</b> | <p><b>Expenses and direct project costs at specific assignment stage</b></p> <p>Where a future assignment requires international travel, in-country fieldwork, local research support, interpretation, translation, venue hire, transcription, survey administration, data collection platforms or other direct project expenses, could the Contracting Authority confirm whether such costs will be:</p> <p>a. Included within the daily rates submitted at framework stage;</p> | <p>In relation to costs regarding International Travel and Subsistence, please refer to the response to Q2 above.</p> <p>In relation to other fieldwork-related costs, Tenderers are expected to include any Tenderer-managed general administration costs relevant to the provision of their services as part of their stated Daily Rate.</p> <p>Successful Framework members will be given specific details for each mini-competition under their respective Lot as they arise. Please note the response to Q3 above regarding maximum rates.</p> <p>a. Please see above and response to Q2.</p> |

| Ref No            | Question                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | Contracting Authority Response                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
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|                   | <p>b. Priced separately as reimbursable expenses at a specific assignment stage;</p> <p>c. Included as a separate cost line in any Supplementary Request for Tenders response; or</p> <p>d. Provided directly or arranged by DFAT.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | <p>b. Please see above. DFAT will provide reimbursement for project-related travel, subsistence, and relevant expenses incurred, which must be accompanied by receipts and other supporting documentation.</p> <p>c. No. Please see response to Q2.</p> <p>d. Please see response to Q2. DFAT will provide reimbursement for project-related travel, subsistence, and relevant expenses incurred, which must be accompanied by receipts and other supporting documentation. This will be discussed and agreed in advance between the winning framework member and the Department's contract manager.</p> |
| <p><b>Q8.</b></p> | <p><b>Insurance requirements and overseas fieldwork</b></p> <p>The RFT indicates that insurance requirements will be specified in the relevant Supplementary Request for Tenders and that the likely insurance levels include Employer's Liability, Public Liability and Professional Indemnity.</p> <p>Could the Contracting Authority clarify whether, where overseas fieldwork is required, any additional insurance requirements, territorial extensions, security cover, medical evacuation cover or country-specific requirements will be specified at a specific assignment stage rather than required to be priced at the framework stage?</p> | <p>The standard general insurance requirements are detailed in Section 2.21.1 on Page 13 of the RFT. International travel insurance may be required and should be included in the all-inclusive professional daily fee rate. The consultant is responsible for securing international travel insurance proportionate to the requirement. Please refer to the response to Q2 above regarding travel requirements.</p> <p>A Tender Amendment Notice will be issued confirming this change.</p>                                                                                                             |

| Ref No      | Question                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | Contracting Authority Response                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
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| <b>Q9.</b>  | <p><b>Sample reports and confidentiality</b></p> <p>The TRD requests a sample evaluation report or equivalent prepared for one of the reference clients.</p> <p>Could the Contracting Authority confirm whether tenderers may submit a redacted, anonymised or confidential version of a sample report where the original report contains client-sensitive, commercially sensitive, security-sensitive or personal data?</p> | <p>Yes.</p> <p>Please refer to Section 2.16 (Freedom of Information) on page 12 of the RFT.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| <b>Q10.</b> | <p><b>Reference contracts</b></p> <p>Could the Contracting Authority confirm whether the same two reference contracts may be used for more than one lot where the references are relevant to each lot, or whether two distinct reference contracts are expected for each lot tendered?</p>                                                                                                                                   | <p>As stated in Section 3.2 (b) (Technical and Professional Ability) on Page 16 of the RFT:</p> <p><i>“Tenderers must demonstrate in the TRD that they have the technical and professional requirement(s) set out below in Appendix 1, both overall as well as specific in respect of each Lot tendered for. Two comparable and relevant reference contracts completed in the past five years must be provided...”</i></p> <p>A separate TRD is required for each Lot tendered. Each Lot will be evaluated separately. It is possible to use the same two references for each separate Lot tendered for.</p> |
| <b>Q11.</b> | <p><b>Key personnel and availability</b></p> <p>The TRD requests CVs of all personnel who will be involved in delivering the services under the lot</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | <p>As stated in Section 6 (Award Criteria) Page 10 of the TRD:</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |

| Ref No      | Question                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | Contracting Authority Response                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
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|             | <p>being tendered and confirmation of availability for the duration of the contract term.</p> <p>Could the Contracting Authority confirm whether tenderers may propose a wider panel of named personnel, with final team composition to be confirmed at a specific assignment stage, depending on assignment scope, timing, availability and subject-matter requirements?</p>                                                | <p><i>“Tenderers should submit the CVs of all the personnel that will be involved in delivering the services under the lot being tendered.”</i></p> <p>Please note that the Department will expect a CV for <i>the key personnel</i> who would be involved in providing the professional services.</p> <p>These CVs will form part of the evaluation of submissions as set out under Award Criteria 2 in the RFT and TRD.</p> <p>For successful Tenderers placed on the Framework, if it becomes necessary over the course of the Framework duration to replace personnel, then a person with comparable experience and skills must be proposed. Acceptance of the proposed personnel onto the Framework will be at the discretion of the Department.</p> |
| <b>Q12.</b> | <p><b>Short-notice activation</b></p> <p>Appendix 1 refers to limited notification of mini-competitions and potential engagement at short notice.</p> <p>Could the Contracting Authority provide an indicative minimum expected response period for future assignment requests and/or an indicative mobilisation period for assignments, particularly for Lot 3 assignments involving fieldwork or specialist personnel?</p> | <p>The reference to <i>‘potential to be engaged at short notice’</i> in Appendix 1 (page 23) refers to indicative response periods of approximately 10 working days’ turn-around for proposals for consideration in a mini-competition. The indicative mobilisation period will vary from project-to-project, but could take place within 10-to-30 working days of confirmation of successful Tenderer for the mini-competition. The mobilisation period will be confirmed in the mini-competition tender documents.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |