

OPEN PROCEDURE

REQUEST FOR TENDER FOR A CONTRACT

RECOMMENDED FOR BELOW EU THRESHOLD ONLY (OGP TEMPLATE TO BE USED FOR ABOVE THRESHOLD)

Scope of Contract	Provision of Consultancy Services to support the development of a Skills Strategy 2027-2030 for Dún Laoghaire Rathdown
Procedure	Open Procedure – National Level
Key Dates	
Issue Date	15:00 Monday 6 July 2026
Closing Date for Queries	15:00 Monday 20 July 2026
Closing Date for Tender Submissions	17:00 Friday 14 August 2026
Contact for Queries	Messaging facility on www.etenders.gov.ie
Format for submission of tenders	Via www.etenders.gov.ie only
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.	
Please note that the Contracting Authority has supplied a Tender Response Document (and where relevant a separate pricing document) which must be used in the tender response. The documents should be uploaded as a Zip file on eTenders to protect the integrity of file names.	

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1 ABOUT THE CONTRACTING AUTHORITY

1.1 The Contracting Authority

Dún Laoghaire Rathdown County Council herein after referred to as the Contracting Authority, is the authority responsible for this procurement.

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

Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown (the 'County') is one of four local authority areas in the Dublin region.

Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown (DLR) is located between the outer suburbs of Dublin City and the Dublin mountains. DLR is one of the most important hubs of economic activity in Ireland, with a high technology cluster of industries located in Sandyford Business District (SBD), the highest proportion of professional, managerial and technical workers of any local authority in Ireland and the highest levels of Median Income, according to the 2022 Census.

With its 17km of coastline, harbour, attractive towns and villages alongside communities it is also a key tourist destination where residents and visitors alike enjoy some of the best natural amenities in Ireland. It also has the benefit of unparalleled access to public transport, employment opportunities, leisure facilities, education, shopping and an attractive public realm. It is a smart, vibrant county; attractive, inclusive and accessible to all.

The County covers the electoral areas of Blackrock, Dundrum, Dún Laoghaire, Glencullen-Sandyford, Killiney-Shankill and Stillorgan. The County's vibrant community is focused across a number of villages, each with its own strong identity, such as Dalkey, Foxrock, Monkstown, Shankill, Sandyford and Stepside. A new town, the biggest urban infrastructure in the country is being built at Cherrywood, which will have a population of 25,000 people.

Within DLR, the 2022 Pobal HP Deprivation Index data shows that there are 33 communities, with a combined population of 10,829, who experience higher levels of marginalisation and social exclusion.

Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council has primary responsibility for DLR's economy and enterprise development. It advances this through the development and implementation of the DLR County Development Plan 2022-2028, the DLR Local Economic and Community Plan 2023-2028, the DLR Tourism Strategy, the council's Corporate Plan and The Dublin Regional Enterprise Initiative as well as the Social Enterprise Strategy. These plans and initiatives promote, inter alia, enterprise development and support the development of the area's nighttime economy and the promotion of strategic economic sectors such as information technology, tourism, further education and innovation.

With an estimated 250,000+ residents (233,000 were recorded in Census 2022) and businesses employing over 95,000 – and with some of Ireland's leading third level education and training institutions including UCD, NovaUCD, the Institute of Art Design and Technology and the Irish Management Institute, the county is both a demander and supplier of skills.

To maintain its goal of achieving a sustainable, inclusive and accessible county underpinned by a strong economy, DLRCC is working to ensure a diverse and accessible skills supply,

further education and training meet both the needs of businesses within the area and also the aspirations of citizens within the area – and adjacent areas – in a manner that shares fairly the county's significant economic opportunities.

To this end DLRCC is developing a robust and evidence-based Skills Strategy that will help to ensure that there will be an adequate supply of appropriately skilled labour available in DLR over the coming years to support sustainable growth. This will help inform skills development for the short, medium and long term in the county.

Further information is available at our corporate website www.dlrcoco.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.

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.

1.3 Use of a Tender Response Document

The Contracting Authority have 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 and the TRD, the following documents form part of the tender documentation:

- Appendix 1 – Contract Terms and Conditions
- 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.

1.4 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 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 the contract. The consortium must appoint a single point of contact who will assume overall responsibility for delivery, and who is authorised to sign the contract on behalf of all consortia members. The Contracting Authority will not act as an arbitrator between members of consortia.

2 2. OVERVIEW OF THE REQUIREMENT

2.1 High Level Scope

The Contracting Authority requires the provision of consultancy services to support the development of a comprehensive Skills Strategy for Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown for the period 2027–2030.

The successful Tenderer will undertake a detailed assessment of the current and future skills requirements of the County, incorporating both demand (expansion and replacement) and supply-side analysis of the labour market. The study will provide a robust evidence base to inform policy, including:

- A baseline analysis of employment and skills characteristics across the County;
- Forecasts of sectoral and competency-based skills needs to 2030;
- Assessment of skills supply pipelines across higher and further education providers;
- Engagement with key stakeholders including enterprise, education providers and representative bodies; and
- Development of practical, time-bound policy recommendations aligned with the strategic objectives of the Contracting Authority.

The Strategy shall reflect the specific economic profile of Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown, including its strong concentration of professional, managerial and technical employment, high levels of educational attainment and the presence of key sectors such as ICT, fintech, medtech, tourism, and creative and audiovisual industries. The Strategy will also be inclusive of training and mentoring needs in the Social Enterprise sector.

The final output shall comprise a publishable Strategy document, including an executive summary and supporting data visualisation.

2.2 Anticipated Timeline

The following indicative timeline is envisaged for this procurement:

Issue RFT	15:00 Monday 06 July
Closing date for Queries	15:00 Monday 20 July
Dates for Site Visit (if applicable)	
Closing date for Receipt of Tenders	17:00 Friday 14 August
Queries via eTenders during standstill period (if applicable)	
Award decision	Friday 28 August
Contract Commencement	Monday 7 September

The dates provided above are estimates at the time of publication of the Request for Tender. The Contracting Authority will endeavour to run the process to this timetable, but this cannot be guaranteed.

2.3 Termination of Contract

The Contracting Authority reserves the right at its sole discretion to terminate any contract where, due to matters outside its control, including but not limited to, increased costs arising from any changes in the Customs Union, which render the commercial arrangement uncompetitive. Termination of any Contract will be carried out in accordance with the Terms and Conditions of the relevant contract.

2.4 Compliance with the Terms and Conditions

Award of contract will be subject to the successful tenderer agreeing to the Contract 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 Instructions to Tenderers (Section 6) of this document.

2.5 Award to Runner Up

If for any reason, it is not possible to award the contract to the designated successful tenderer emerging from this competitive process, or if having awarded a contract, the successful tenderer fails to deliver the contract in accordance with the terms and conditions, the Contracting Authority reserves the right to award the contract to the next highest scoring tenderer based on the terms advertised at any time during the tender validity period. This shall be without prejudice to the right of the Contracting Authority to cancel this competitive process and/or initiate a new contract award procedure at its sole discretion. [OBJ]

3 DETAILED SPECIFICATION OF REQUIREMENTS

The Contracting Authority invites tenders for the award of a contract as specified hereunder.

3.1 Specification

Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council, herein after referred to as the Contracting Authority, is seeking to develop a DLR Skills Strategy (2027–2030) – referred to below as ‘The Strategy’. This will involve carrying out detailed analysis of the skills requirements across the County over the medium-term in respect of the key sectors as identified in the DLR Economic and Enterprise Development Strategy and emerging sectors.

Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council, hereinafter referred to as the Contracting Authority, is seeking to develop a DLR Skills Strategy 2027-2030 – referred to below as “the Strategy”. The development of the Strategy should be underpinned by a detailed analysis of the current supply of skills, an analysis of the current and predicted employment landscape, and a detailed analysis of skills requirements across the County over the medium-term.

As well as maximising the impact and relevance of the high quality and diversity of options available in University Education, Higher Education, Further Education, training and Apprenticeships, the strategy should seek to identify existing and potential new skills development methods including Micro Courses, Lifelong Learning courses and others. It should seek to ensure that the full suite of options for skills development in DLR is as closely matched as possible to the range of current and future skills needs.

The analysis will focus on sectors of strategic importance to the DLR economy, including Tourism and Hospitality, Gastronomy or Culinary; Professional, Managerial and Financial Services; Financial Technology (FinTech); Medical Technologies (MedTech); Information and Communications Technology (ICT); Creative Industries (including Audio-Visual and Film); Retail and Leisure; and the Marine and Blue Economy. It should also consider the emerging Social Enterprise sector in DLR.

To ensure a best practice approach when seeking data and consulting any statistical research, the analysis will refer to and be consistent with as far as possible the nearest available NACE classifications:

FIGURE 3.1.1 SKILLS SECTORS AND RELEVANT NACE CATEGORIES

Sector Descriptor	Nearest Equivalent NACE Sector(s)
Tourism and Hospitality	55 – Accommodation; 56 – Food & Beverage Services; 79 – Travel Agency / Tour Operator Activities
Gastronomy / Culinary	56 – Food & Beverage Service Activities
Professional, Managerial and Financial Services	69 – Legal & Accounting; 70 – Head Offices & Management Consultancy; 71 – Architecture & Engineering; 72 – R&D; 73 – Advertising; 64–66 – Financial & Insurance Activities
Financial Technology (FinTech)	64–66 – Financial Services; 62 – Computer Programming & Consultancy; 63 – Information Services

Medical Technologies (MedTech)	32.5 – Medical & Dental Instruments; 26 – Electronic Equipment Manufacturing; 72 – Scientific R&D
Information and Communications Technology (ICT)	58 – Publishing; 59 – Audio-visual Production; 60 – Broadcasting; 61 – Telecommunications; 62 – Programming & IT Consultancy; 63 – Information Services
Creative Industries (incl. Audio-Visual & Film)	59 – Film & TV Production; 60 – Broadcasting; 90 – Creative Arts; 91 – Libraries & Museums; 74 – Specialised Design
Retail and Leisure	45–47 – Wholesale & Retail Trade; 90–93 – Arts, Entertainment & Recreation; 56 – Food & Beverage (leisure component)
Marine and Blue Economy	03 – Fishing & Aquaculture; 30 – Shipbuilding; 50 – Water Transport; 52 – Port & Harbour Activities; 35 – Energy (offshore); 71 – Marine Engineering

This analysis will include both the demand (expansion and replacement) and supply side of the County's labour market. The study will provide a baseline analysis of the current employment landscape in the County, disaggregated by sector, and the skills characteristics of those in employment.

From the demand side, the study will include an analysis of forecast skills needs by sector and competency. The study will provide a detailed analysis of the supply side, examining the anticipated pipeline given current course provision and output at university, institute of technology, further education and vocational/technical level.

The analysis should include a more granular focused sectoral input including sectorally driven workshops and stakeholder engagement to gather granular level insights on skills demand and supply. The study should have a strong focus on demand-led, employer informed skills systems and on the need to align skills supply with labour market needs in a flexible, responsive and forward-looking manner.

Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown is a predominantly urban and suburban county with a highly educated workforce, strong connectivity to Dublin City and regional economic clusters (see above) in Dún Laoghaire Rathdown with a particular focus on the Tourism sector (given the area's significant coastal and mountain location).

DLR has a highly skilled labour force, with a significant proportion of workers employed in professional, managerial and technical occupations, and one of the highest rates of third-level educational attainment in the State. The County also exhibits distinctive labour market characteristics, including a high prevalence of remote working and strong integration with the wider Dublin metropolitan labour market.

While these factors present opportunities for DLR, they also constitute challenges in terms of planning and providing for the future, including ensuring that the County has access to a sufficiently diverse and accessible labour pool, and that there is alignment between skills supply and demand in a high-cost and competitive labour market environment.

This project will support the development of a robust and evidence-based Skills Strategy for the short, medium and long term to ensure that there will be an adequate supply of appropriately skilled labour available in DLR over the coming years to support sustainable economic growth.

3.2 Specific requirements

There will be seven main components to this study. These are as follows:

1. Literature Review of Current Policies, Strategies and Research

This will include relevant domestic and international skills policy including, but not limited to, the National Skills Strategy, Regional Skills Insights, Local Authority Skills Strategies, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) Skills Strategy Ireland, the National Skills Council Strategic Advice (2025), 'Skills Matter: Priorities to Shape Our Future Capabilities', outputs of the Expert Group on Future Skills Needs (EGFSN), and Regional Skills Insights as reflected in the work undertaken by the Skills and Labour Market Research Unit (SLMRU) within SOLAS (An tSeirbhís Oideachais Leanúnaigh agus Scileanna), including use of SLMRU forecasts, and some reference, where and as relevant, to forecasts by the Centre Européen pour le Développement de la Formation Professionnelle (CEDEFOP). The forthcoming Skills Observatory will be used as a resource. Subsequent elements of the analysis must have regard for the findings of the updated literature review.

The Tenderer shall also have regard to relevant regional and local policy documents including the Dublin Regional Skills Forum Insights Report, Regional Spatial Economic Strategy, the Dublin Regional Enterprise Plan, the Regional Enterprise Initiative, Local Economic and Community Plan (LECP), County Development Plan (CDP), DLR Economic and Enterprise Development Strategy, Tourism Strategy, Local Enterprise Offices Policy Statement 2024-2030 The Dún Laoghaire Rathdown Social Enterprise Strategy 2024-2026 and Southside Partnership DLR Strategy Plan 2027-2030 will be also taken into account in relation to including training and mentoring for the social and community enterprise sector.as will any other relevant local strategies and consultation outputs.

2. Baseline Study of Existing Employment Landscape

This element should set out a detailed examination of the existing profile of employment in the County, categorised by sector using Nomenclature of Economic Activities Revision 2 (NACE Rev. 2) classifications and, where appropriate, Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) occupations.

A mixed method approach should be used, comprising a top-down analysis of data sources such as Central Statistics Office (CSO), Skills and Labour Market Research Unit (SLMRU), European Skills, Competences, Qualifications and Occupations (ESCO), International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED), Occupational Information Network (O*NET), Dublin Regional Skills Forum (DRSF) data (which will be made available to the successful Tenderer), and outputs of the literature review, combined with interview data from engagement with business and industry stakeholders and consultation with a representative sample of firms across key industry sectors in DLR to develop a bottom-up understanding. The baseline analysis should be disaggregated across the County's Local Electoral Areas (LEAs).

In undertaking the work, the successful Tenderer will be required to present an analysis of the existing and forecast skills base in terms of both occupationally defined skills and 'cross sectoral'

competencies that pertain to one or more skills areas. It is proposed that the sectoral categorisation should follow the NACE Rev. 2 groupings. The competency requirements may be categorised within recognised national or international frameworks such as ESCO, ISCED or O*NET, and may include:

- Construction and technical trade skills
- Business, administration and financial services skills
- Management, sales and marketing skills
- Artificial intelligence (AI), digital and information technology (IT) skills
- Communications and media skills
- Project and programme management
- Regulatory and compliance skills
- Creative industry skills
- Core personal and transferable skills
- Research and education/training skills
- Social and community care needs (to prepare for an ageing society)

3. Stakeholder Engagement

The baseline study should have deep stakeholder engagement to ensure that the differing skills needs and workforce development challenges across enterprise in the county are fully captured. The study should be particularly conscious of and sensitive to the different skills needs of SMEs – particularly in the Tourism sector - and of multinationals. Within this, an analysis should be conducted of existing skills gaps that are not being met at present and anticipated future skills requirements.

Stakeholder engagement should include the key categories and stakeholders listed below (a not necessarily exhaustive list of examples is provided for each).

FIGURE 3.2.1 KEY CATEGORIES OF STAKEHOLDER

Representatives of enterprise within DLR

The successful tenderer will, in collaboration with DLRCC, draw up a comprehensive list of business representative bodies to be consulted in the county.

Higher and Further Education and Training providers

1	UCD / NovaUCD
2	IADT
3	DLRETB
4	NIBRT

State Departments and agencies

1	DFHERIS, Solas
2	IDA
3	Enterprise Ireland

Leading representatives of key sectors (company in brackets)

(Please refer to table 3.1.1 above)

1	DFHERIS, Solas
2	IDA
3	Enterprise Ireland

Regional and Local agencies and authorities

1	DLRCC
2	Regional Skills Forum
3	Dún Laoghaire Harbourmaster

Social and Community Enterprise

1	Southside Partnership DLR
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A stakeholder engagement plan should be developed at the start of the process to specify a full list of consultees and timetable their engagement in a timely and efficient manner.

To that end the successful tenderer pay propose to integrate or group consultations and, additionally, use survey evidence as part of the stakeholder engagement plan.

4. Projected Growth in the Years to 2030

Taking the findings of the baseline analysis, this section should set out the replacement and expansion demand across each competency and sector group for the years to 2030. Using data trends and projections; including benchmark comparisons between DLR and the Dublin and wider EMRA region, the Tenderer will assess the pathway of expected sectoral growth within DLR over the medium-term, and within this, examine the type and volume of skills that will be demanded.

Drawing on the output of stakeholder consultation with employer representative bodies and output from the National Skills Council (NSC), the study should consider the impacts of megatrends including artificial intelligence (AI), automation, digitalisation, sustainability transitions, demographic change, productivity challenges, hybrid working models and changing workforce participation patterns should also be explained.

The findings should also be informed by the specific sectoral findings of the Expert Group on Future Skills Needs (EGFSN), and the latest available SLMRU forecasts at occupational level and explain any differences that may arise between DLR and the national picture.

As with the baseline assessment, the methodology employed should take a top-down analysis of data sources, combined with a bottom-up approach of surveying a cohort of the County's employers in order to assess their expected skills needs over the coming years.

In examining the volume of demand, this research should take into account both expansion and replacement requirements.

5. DLR Skills Supply to 2030

Using the learnings from the earlier components, the current supply pipeline should be assessed to ascertain how the supply of skills is going to change over the coming years, given current provision of education and training.

At a minimum, this assessment shall include Higher Education Institutions (e.g. University College Dublin (UCD), NovaUCD, Institute of Art, Design and Technology (IADT), Irish Management Institute (IMI)) and Further Education and Training (FET) providers such as Dún Laoghaire and Dublin Education and Training Board (DDLETB), as well as Skillnet Ireland Networks, in-company training initiatives and other relevant providers. Skillnets annual talent landscape should be referenced to identify key trends.

The study should consider the impact on current and future supply arising from the provision and expected changes in the provision of technical and vocational education and training, including PLC provision, apprenticeships, traineeships, micro-credentials and lifelong learning pathways. The analysis should also reflect the need to support disadvantaged and vulnerable groups to access education and training.

Accordingly, analysis of the supply-side should focus on the types and levels of skills that ought to best be supplied from institutions within and adjacent to the County.

The work should also include an analysis of workforce participation, including those seeking to upskill or transition between sectors, and the existing cohort of unemployed persons in terms of education, training and previous employment.

The analysis should include, as well as research of what is needed, a full mapping of the current publicly funded skills ecosystem as it exists currently including Higher Education, Further Education and Training, Apprenticeships, Traineeships, Skillnet Ireland Networks, Springboard+, Micro-credentials, Micro Qualifications, eCollege and relevant enterprise support initiatives. This is to enable the navigational challenges of raise the awareness amongst employers of what skills are available at the present time.

6. Skills Forecasting

Analysis of demand indicators for skills including employment data, job advertisements, skills audits, recruitment agency surveys and inward foreign investment data / forecasts.

Analysis of supply indicators including 'earn & learn', graduates, training outputs and jobseekers and immigration including quantitative projections of future trends in employment by sector, economic activity and occupational group.

In order to ensure the accuracy and robustness of forecasts, the successful Tenderer should use a variety of data sources, tools and methods for analysis purposes.

Future trends on the level of education of the population and the labour force should also be estimated by the successful Tenderer on an annual basis for each year from 2027 to 2030.

This analysis should also identify target cohorts for interventions, identify skills demand to inform training provision, and assess the impact of global economic and technological changes.

The successful Tenderer will be required to present data in an accessible format, including the use of infographics.

The successful Tenderer will be required to fully document and provide to the Council a robust forecasting methodology with detailed information on data sources, tools and methods used to prepare the forecast and all raw data collected as part of the analysis.

The Council will retain all rights to the data, infographics and analysis.

7. Policy Recommendations

The analysis should point to current and future skills needs and make clear and time-bound recommendations to address these issues, building on existing DLR strategies and aligning with the sectors of priority as identified in the DLR Economic and Enterprise Development Strategy.

Actions recommended in the Strategy should be within the policy remit of local actors including, but not limited to, Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council (DLRCC), the Local Enterprise Office (LEO), higher education and further education providers, Skillnet Ireland Networks and Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme (SICAP) and Local Area Employment Service (LAES) such as the Southside Partnership DLR and Intreo/Department of Social Protection.

The Tenderer should map out clear implementation framework with recommendations that identify lead organisations, supporting stakeholders, indicative timelines, success measures and potential delivery mechanisms including provisions, resources and funding that support clear outcomes of awareness as part of the overall implementation of the policy.

Publication & printing

Preparation of the DLR Skills Strategy document (2027–2030), including the elements listed above, an executive summary, illustrative graphics and infographics of the analysis in a format suitable for print and publication by Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council.

Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council will be responsible for printing the finished document and all rights and ownership of data and analysis as part of this contract will be retained by the Council.

To facilitate printing of final reports, where this is deemed necessary, high resolution pdf print file versions of relevant deliverables are, on request, to be supplied with 5mm cut marks & bleed, please ensure document is sized correctly for print with all images to be high resolution print quality, inner pages to be supplied as single pages, cover to be supplied as spreads with spine.

Requirements for a synopsis report in PowerPoint

Presentation material will be of a high visual standard, will be credible to expert audiences and accessible to non-expert audiences.

Access to Director, Project Manager and Senior Consultant expertise

The successful tenderer will ensure that the Contracting Authority has adequate access to Director level, Project Management level and senior consultant expertise during the full duration of the contract.

Oversight and Delivery

An advisory group comprising representatives from business representative bodies, SME and Large enterprise stakeholders, education and training providers, Dublin Regional Skills Forum (DRSF), Dublin Regional Enterprise Initiative (DREI) and Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council will oversee the delivery of this project.

The successful Tenderer will be required to attend regular meetings, provide updates on progress, and present interim and final findings to stakeholders including Council officials and elected members. and tenderer to present to DLRCC Senior Management, Economic Development & Marine SPC and full council

Deliverables

A report suitable for printing with relevant graphics and infographics, including an Executive Summary, will be prepared by the successful Tenderer, presenting the following:

- Literature Review of current policies and research
- Baseline study of existing employment landscape
- Projected growth in the years to 2030
- Skills supply analysis to 2030
- Skills forecasting
- Policy recommendations provided using an “Implementation and Monitoring Framework to structure recommended responses according to actions, lead stakeholders, timelines, performance indicators and review mechanisms.

- Mapping exercise of existing sectoral provisions

Timelines

The Contracting Authority envisages that the Services will be delivered over a period of approximately 20-24 weeks from contract commencement. Assuming a mobilisation in late August, the successful Tenderer will be required to complete the key phases of the project, including literature review, baseline analysis, stakeholder engagement, demand and supply assessment, forecasting, and preparation of policy recommendations, by December of the same calendar year, with finalisation of the report, design and publication outputs completed by early Q1 of the following year. The Tenderer shall propose a detailed project plan setting out milestones, deliverables and timelines within this overall period, including provision for stakeholder engagement, interim reporting and validation of findings with the Contracting Authority.

3.3 Details of Options

Not applicable.

3.4 Site Visits

1. Not used.

3.5 Duration

The contract will be for a period of nine months.

The Contracting Authority reserves the right at its sole discretion to extend the contract, subject to satisfactory performance, budget availability and ongoing business needs. The number and duration of extensions will be three months, should an extension be offered.

3.6 Indicative budget

The indicative budget for the contract is €80,000 inclusive of VAT

3.7 Contract Management

The Contracting Authority requires tenderers to nominate a dedicated contract manager who will act as the main point of contact for the duration of the contract. This person shall have the authority to deal with all matters in relation to contracts and be responsible for the satisfactory delivery of the services required. The duties of the contract manager will include the following:

- Overall responsibility for a good working relationship with the Contracting Authority;
- Provide regular reports on performance as agreed with the Contracting Authority;
- Meet as and when required to review and examine performance in adherence to an agreed Service Level Agreement and Key Performance Indicators (KPIs);
- Deal with disputes, complaints or concerns that cannot be adequately resolved;
- Proactively discuss with the Contracting Authority ways of improving efficiency regarding service delivery in general and providing suggestions for improvement and cost savings.

NOTE: Tenderers will note that contract management activities will be non-billable.

3.8 Format of deliverables

In line with DLRCC's commitment to environmentally sustainable practice interim and final deliverables will be supplied in soft copy form.

For material that may result in final publication by printing, high resolution pdf print files are to be supplied with 5mm cut marks & bleed, please ensure document is sized correctly for print with all images to be high resolution print quality, inner pages to be supplied as single pages, cover to be supplied as spreads with spine,

4 SELECTION CRITERIA

The Contracting Authority is using the **open** procedure for the award of this contract, therefore, while all interested parties may submit a tender, only those demonstrating that they have the required level of financial and technical capacity will have their tender considered. 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 Section 4.3 on condition that all information self-declared will be provided promptly on request at any time prior to an award decision.

[Note: not all of the selection criteria may be relevant. Ensure that each of the criteria and rules you use is relevant and proportionate to the initial contract and will not result in the inappropriate inclusion/exclusion of tenderers]

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 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. The consortium must appoint a single point of contact who will assume overall responsibility for delivery, and who is authorised to sign the contract on behalf of all consortia members. The Contracting Authority will not act as an arbitrator between members of consortia.

4.3 General, Legal and Financial Requirements

Tenderers are required to provide information on the following 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 your 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 information on sub-contractors and/or consortium members if applicable.

Declarations

- Complete the Declaration of Bona Fides as per Art. 57 of Directive 2014/24/EU as implemented by SI 2814 of May 2016 as contained in the Tender Response Document.
- Complete the Declaration regarding compliance with relevant statutory obligations as contained in the Tender Response Document. Where tenderers are established and operating outside of Ireland compliance with equivalent legislation as applicable in the country of establishment / operation is required.
- Complete a European Single Procurement Document (ESPD), either electronically via the eESPD on eTenders or as a separate uploaded attachment with the tender response will be accepted as evidence of compliance.
- 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.
- 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	Confirmation that the tenderer / all parties associated with the tenderer are fully tax compliant in accordance with the rules of the Irish Revenue Commissioners and in their country of establishment.
Financial Standing	(a) Confirmation that the tendering party turnover exceeded €100,000 during each of the last three years or pro-rata if more recently established firms are tendering – however the firm must have been in existence for at least 6 months. (b) Confirmation of financial standing ensuring the tendering party has the financial capacity to pay its debts identified on the current statement of assets and liabilities as being the debts as they fall due. Evidence of both statements will be required prior to the award of any contract.
Insurance	Confirmation of the following insurances being in place: • Employer's Liability - €13 million • Public Liability - €6.5 million or €2.6m (where for services not involving working with equipment / interfacing with public) • Product Liability - €6.5 million • Professional Indemnity - €1m • Cyber Liability - € 2 million

4.4 Technical Capacity Requirements

Tenderers must demonstrate sufficient technical capacity to deliver the services described in Section 3. This will be assessed on a pass/fail basis.

Tenderers shall provide evidence of:

- Successful delivery of at least **three (3) comparable consultancy projects** within the last five (5) years, in the Irish market, including experience in skills analysis, labour market assessment, economic strategy, academia engagement or related fields;

- Excellent and comprehensive knowledge of the skills policy and training landscape in Ireland. Excellent knowledge of and familiarity with key reports and strategies at regional and local level
- Experience in applying recognised data frameworks and methodologies, including but not limited to NACE classification, ESCO/ISCED frameworks or equivalent;
- Demonstrated capability in quantitative and qualitative research methods, including stakeholder engagement, survey design and econometric or forecasting techniques;
- Access to appropriately qualified personnel, including a project lead with significant experience in economic or skills strategy development and team members with relevant analytical and research expertise;
- Capability to manage stakeholder engagement processes involving public sector, enterprise, education, local development company and not for profit stakeholders.
- (Ideally) A good working knowledge of relevant agencies in skills, education and training including Solas, Dublin Regional Skills Forum, Dublin Regional Enterprise Plans and key government Departments and agencies (the Department of Further & Higher Education Research, Innovation and Science (DFHERIS), the Higher Education Authority) and the Department of Enterprise, Tourism and Employment (DETE).

Previous Contracts / Experience

Tenderers must provide information clearly demonstrating successful delivery of three instances of previous comparable experience/projects, involving the features as defined in the TRD. These projects should be within the last five (5) years. 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.

Note #1: 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.

Note #2: 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.

Note #3: 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.

Note #4: 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.

Personnel and Skills

Tenderers must provide information which demonstrates access to the minimum number of skilled personnel as indicated below and outlined in the TRD.

Skillset Required	Minimum Number
As defined in the TRD	As defined in the TRD

Technical Equipment and Resources

Tenderers must provide information which demonstrates access to the required level of technical resources as indicated below and outlined in the TRD.

Technical Equipment & Resource Required	Minimum Requirement
As defined in the TRD	As defined in the TRD

Health & Safety Management System

Tenderers must provide information which demonstrates operation of health & safety systems and procedures in line with all relevant Safety Health & Welfare at Work legislation. Please complete the TRD. Evidence of compliance will be required as condition of contract award.

Quality Assurance Management System

Tenderers must provide information which demonstrates a commitment to quality assurance and provides details of quality assurance policies and systems and whether 3rd party certified. Please complete the TRD.

Environmental Management System

Tenderers must provide information which demonstrates operation of an appropriate environmental management system whether 3rd party certified or in-house. Please complete the TRD.

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 contract will be awarded to the compliant tenderer on the basis of the Most Economically Advantageous Tender ("MEAT") taking into account the following award criteria and weightings. Tenderers should note that the qualitative award criteria are assessed first.

Please note that the maximum marks available is 1,000.

Criterion A		Weighting	Maximum Marks	Minimum Marks Required
		20%	200	N/A
Title	Cost			
Description	Tenderers shall submit a fixed project fee covering all elements of the service. The cost score will be calculated in accordance with Section 5.1			
Criterion B		Weighting	Maximum Marks	Minimum Marks
		30%	300	120
Title	Approach and methodology to service delivery			
Description	The clear demonstration of an approach and methodology and how it will secure the timely realisation of specific deliverables, including (but not confined to): • Approach to skills demand and supply analysis; • Proposed forecasting methodology; • Approach to employer engagement across SMEs, large enterprises, representative bodies and education providers • Approach to translating research findings into practical and implementable actions.; • Data sources, tools and analytical techniques; • Project planning and delivery structure.			

Criterion C		Weighting	Maximum Marks	Minimum Marks
		20%	200	80
Title	Quality, Relevant Experience and Availability of Resources of Proposed Team			
Description	Evaluation will consider: • Relevant experience of the Tenderer in delivering comparable projects; • Qualifications and experience of key personnel; • Reasonable and proportionate access afforded to the Contracting Authority by the successful tenderer to Director, Project Manager and Senior Consultant expertise for the duration of the contract • Demonstrated expertise in economic analysis, labour market research and policy development.			
Criterion D		Weighting	Maximum Marks	Minimum Marks
		10%	100	40
Title	Sustainability: Environmental and Social Considerations			
Description	Tenderers shall outline how sustainability principles will be integrated into the delivery of the contract, including environmental considerations and broader social value where applicable.			
Criterion E		Weighting	Maximum Marks	Minimum Marks
		20%	200	80
Title	Contract Management			
Description	Tenderers shall demonstrate: • Project governance arrangements; • Communication and reporting structures; • Risk management and quality assurance processes.			

NOTE 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

Scoring Band	Description
1 (81% - 100%)	An excellent response that fully meets requirements and provides comprehensive, detailed and convincing assurance that the Tenderer will deliver on the Contracting Authority's requirements to an excellent standard.
2 (61% - 80%)	A good response that demonstrates real understanding of the requirements and assurance that the Tenderer will deliver on the Contracting Authority's requirements to a good standard.
3 (41% - 60%)	A satisfactory response which demonstrates a reasonable understanding of the requirements and gives reasonable assurance of delivery of the Contracting Authority's requirements to an adequate standard but does not provide sufficiently convincing assurance to award a higher mark.
4 (21% - 40%)	An average response where some capabilities to meet the requirements are detailed however reservations exist. Lacks full credibility and/or convincing detail, and there is a significant risk that the delivery of the Contracting Authority's requirements will not be successful.
5 (1% - 20%)	A poor response where limited information was provided and serious reservations exist. This may be because, for example, insufficient detail is provided, and/or the response has fundamental flaws, is seriously inadequate or seriously lacks credibility with a high risk of non-delivery of the Contracting Authority's requirements.
6 (0%)	No response or response completely fails to address the criterion under consideration.

Marks in the score ranges outlined above can be awarded where responses so merit additional marks.

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 quotation 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 Meetings

Award of contract may be subject to attendance at a verification meeting. It would be essential that the key personnel assigned to this contract 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 in light of 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 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:

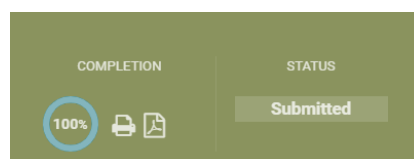
Email: irish-eproc-helpdesk@eurodyn.com

Phone: +353-818001459

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

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 Closing date for Tenders

The closing date for tender submission	as specified on the title page
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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.

6.3 Queries

The closing date for submitting queries	as specified on the title page
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All queries regarding this tender should be 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.

6.4 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.

6.5 Tender Validity Period

To allow sufficient time for Tender assessment a Tender Validity period of 12 months is required, this period commencing on the closing date by which the Tenders are to be returned.

6.6 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.

6.7 Formatting of Tenderers / Amendment of Tender Documentation

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. 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.

6.8 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.

6.9 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.

6.10 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.

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6.11 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.

6.12 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.

6.13 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.

6.14 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.

6.15 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.

6.16 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.

6.17 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:

- Award of Contract
- Letter of Regret
- Decision not to proceed with the Award of Contract

6.18 Award Notices

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

6.19 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.

6.20 Copyright

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).

6.21 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".

6.22 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.

6.23 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 awarded.

6.24 Currency and Payment

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.

6.25 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.

6.26 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.

6.27 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.

6.28 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).

6.29 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.

6.30 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.

6.31 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.

6.32 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.

6.33 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.

6.34 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.