



**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 – Updated on 13th July 2026

Please see additional questions Q48 to Q76

Ref No	Question	Contracting Authority Response
Q1.	Framework operation and call-off mechanism The procurement notice, section 5.1.15 “Techniques – Framework agreement”, appears to describe the Framework Agreement as being without reopening of competition. 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-	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” The terms of the competition are as set out in the tender documents. All Framework Members will be invited to participate in each mini-competition under their respective Lot.

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	competition procedure. Appendix 5, Article 6, also refers to award criteria for mini-competitions. Could the Contracting Authority please clarify the intended mechanism for awarding contracts under the Framework Agreement, including whether: a. Contracts will be awarded without reopening competition; b. Contracts will be awarded through Supplementary Requests for Tenders / mini-competitions; c. The mechanism may vary by lot, assignment type, value, urgency or other circumstances; or d. A clarification or amendment will be issued to align the procurement notice and RFT documentation. 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?	
Q2.	Pricing, travel and subsistence Appendix 2 states that quoted daily rates should be inclusive of all costs, including travel and	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

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	subsistence, and also states that the required services will not be delivered in person. However, the requirements for Lot 3 indicate that assignments may include a fieldwork component averaging approximately two weeks per project. Could the Contracting Authority please clarify whether tenderers should price on the basis that: a. All services under the Framework Agreement will be delivered remotely and no travel or subsistence costs will arise; b. Fieldwork under Lot 3 may be required in person, where specified in a future Supplementary Request for Tenders; 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 d. Such fieldwork-related costs, where applicable, may be priced separately, reimbursed separately, or specified separately at Supplementary Request for Tenders stage.	resides. Any such domestic travel costs are expected to be included within the proposed professional fee rate. International Travel and Subsistence costs associated with the provision of services are not to be included within the proposed Daily Rates. 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 (Subsistence Allowances Abroad). Such costs will be discussed and agreed in advance between the winning Tenderer and the Department's contract manager. In particular: 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. 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. c. Please note above text in bold and subsequent paragraph on International Travel and Subsistence costs. Please see response to Q7 and Q8 regarding travel insurance and other project related costs.

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		d. No; please note above text in bold and subsequent paragraph on International Travel and Subsistence costs. A Tender Amendment Notice will be issued confirming this change.
Q3.	Applicability of framework daily rates to future assignments 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? 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?	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.” Framework members will be permitted at mini-competition stage to submit Daily Fee Rates below the rates quoted at Framework stage.
Q4.	Evaluation of cost The TRD states that the total of the Senior Consultant and Junior Consultant daily rates will be used for evaluation purposes. 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?	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.

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Q5.	Junior Consultant rate Could the Contracting Authority confirm whether tenderers must provide a Junior Consultant daily rate where the tenderer proposes to deliver the relevant lot using only senior personnel? 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?	The response provided to Q4 above also applies to Q5.
Q6.	Lot-specific pricing 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?	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.
Q7.	Expenses and direct project costs at specific assignment stage 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:	In relation to costs regarding International Travel and Subsistence, please refer to the response to Q2 above. 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.

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	a. Included within the daily rates submitted at framework stage; b. Priced separately as reimbursable expenses at a specific assignment stage; c. Included as a separate cost line in any Supplementary Request for Tenders response; or d. Provided directly or arranged by DFAT.	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. a. Please see above and response to Q2. 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. c. No. Please see response to Q2. 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.
Q8.	Insurance requirements and overseas fieldwork 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. Could the Contracting Authority clarify whether, where overseas fieldwork is required, any additional insurance requirements, territorial extensions, security cover, medical evacuation	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. A Tender Amendment Notice will be issued confirming this change.

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	cover or country-specific requirements will be specified at a specific assignment stage rather than required to be priced at the framework stage?	
Q9.	Sample reports and confidentiality The TRD requests a sample evaluation report or equivalent prepared for one of the reference clients. 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?	Yes. Please refer to Section 2.16 (Freedom of Information) on page 12 of the RFT.
Q10.	Reference contracts 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?	As stated in Section 3.2 (b) (Technical and Professional Ability) on Page 16 of the RFT: <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> 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.

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Q11.	Key personnel and availability The TRD requests CVs of all personnel who will be involved in delivering the services under the lot being tendered and confirmation of availability for the duration of the contract term. 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?	As stated in Section 6 (Award Criteria) Page 10 of the TRD: <i>“Tenderers should submit the CVs of all the personnel that will be involved in delivering the services under the lot being tendered.”</i> Please note that the Department will expect a CV for <i>the key personnel</i> who would be involved in providing the professional services. These CVs will form part of the evaluation of submissions as set out under Award Criteria 2 in the RFT and TRD. 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.
Q12.	Short-notice activation Appendix 1 refers to limited notification of mini-competitions and potential engagement at short notice. 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?	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.

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Q13.	If applying as an individual consultant solely for Lot 1, is it necessary to have a turnover of €100,000 as specified under Selection Criteria 32 (a)?	The minimum turnover threshold requirement for Lot 1 has been reduced to €75,000 per annum over a three-year period. A Tender Amendment Notice will be issued to confirm this change and the TRD template will be updated to also reflect the change.
Q14.	Consortium composition, roles and nominated lead entity Paragraph 2.5 of the RFT provides that, where a group of undertakings submits a Tender, DFAT will deal with all matters relating to the Competition through a single nominated entity authorised to represent all members of the group. It also states that the Tenderer must provide details of all members of the group and their role in the Tender, and clearly identify which consortium member is performing which element of the Services. Could the Contracting Authority please clarify in what sections of the Tender Response Document and/or supporting attachments tenderers should present the following information: a. The composition of the consortium, including the legal names and details of each consortium member;	The requirements relating to Consortia and Prime/Subcontractors are set out in Section 2.5 of the RFT. The documentation necessary to detail a Consortium's proposal must take into account the requirements set out in the following sections of the RFT: • Section 2.5 (Consortia and Prime/Subcontractors) • Section 2.2 (Compliant Tenders) • Section 3.1(Compliant Tenders) • Section 3.2 (Selection Criteria) The details required in relation to a consortium should be included in the relevant TRD sections, per the following: a. Section 1. Tenderer's Profile. Tenderer can copy/paste new tables in this section for each profile member in the proposed consortia. b. Section 1. Tenderer's Profile. The first profile listed should indicate it is the single nominated entity authorised to represent the consortium for the purposes of the Competition.

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	b. Confirmation of the single nominated entity authorised to represent the consortium for the purposes of the Competition; c. The respective roles and responsibilities of each consortium member in delivering the Services for the relevant lot; and d. Any supporting authorisation or commitment letter from consortium members confirming the nominated lead entity and the availability of their resources. In particular, could the Contracting Authority confirm whether this information should be included in the Tenderer's Profile section, the Technical and Professional Ability section, the qualitative award criteria responses, or submitted as a separate attachment?	c. Please include this information in Section 6. Award Criteria, response to Criteria 2. d. Any supporting documentation can be submitted separate to but accompanying the TRD.
Q15.	Appendix 4 – Declaration as to Personal Circumstances of Tenderer Appendix 4 contains the Declaration as to Personal Circumstances of Tenderer. Section 3.3.2 of the RFT indicates that this declaration may be requested from the successful tenderer as part of the evidence required prior to appointment. In the case of a consortium tender, could the Contracting Authority please clarify: a. if each consortium member will be required to complete and execute the Appendix 4 declaration	It is only successful Tenderers who will be requested to complete Appendix 4 – Declaration as to Personal Circumstances of Tenderer. a. All members of a Consortium would need to complete Appendix 4 if successful. b. Internal staff would not be required to complete an Appendix 4, and neither would an individual expert if they are contracted by the Tenderer; however, if they are a direct party to the Consortium then they would need to complete Appendix 4, if successful. c. As above, if the individual experts are part of a team either as staff or external contractors, then they are not required to complete a separate

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	or if a declaration from the nominated lead entity / proposed Prime Contractor will be sufficient; b. Are we right to understand that the declaration is intended to cover the tendering entity, its internal staff and also individual experts proposed in the tender response? c. Please confirm that individual experts proposed as a part of the team do not need to fill Appendix 4.	Appendix 4; however, if they are a party to the Consortium in their own right then they will need to complete an Appendix 4, if successful.
Q16.	Selection criteria evidence for consortium members and relied-upon entities Section 3.3.2 refers to evidence demonstrating that “each entity concerned” meets the Selection Criteria. In the case of a consortium tender, could the Contracting Authority please clarify whether “each entity concerned” means: a. The consortium collectively assessed on the basis of the combined financial, technical and professional capacity of the consortium members; b. Each individual consortium member separately; c. The nominated lead entity / proposed Prime Contractor only; or	Please see Section 3.1 (Compliant Tenders) in the RFT. A consortium comprises members with one member nominated to be the focal point of contact (‘entity’) on behalf of the consortium. A consortium’s members will be collectively assessed (as a whole) against the stated selection criteria. In particular, this means that a consortium’s members must together have the minimum turnover as required per Lot. Please refer to Q13 and the associated Tender Amendment Notice.

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	d. Each entity whose capacity is relied upon for meeting the Selection Criteria. In particular, could the Contracting Authority confirm whether the €100,000 annual turnover requirement and the requirement for two comparable reference contracts may be satisfied by the consortium members collectively, or whether each consortium member is expected to satisfy these requirements individually?	
Q17.	CVs and availability of named experts The CV template in the TRD asks tenderers to confirm availability for the duration of the contract term. Could the Contracting Authority please clarify how the partial availability of a proposed expert will be treated in the evaluation of the tender response? For example, where an expert is available for the duration of the framework term but may be subject to assignment-specific scheduling constraints, should this be stated in the CV, and would this affect scoring under the resources, knowledge and expertise criterion?	Confirmation should be provided that the relevant person is available to participate, if successful, for the duration of the Framework. Framework members will be given details at mini-competition stage that will allow them to assess availability for the specific assignment.
Q18.	Number of CVs to be submitted Could the Contracting Authority please clarify whether there is an expected minimum or maximum number of CVs to be submitted for each lot? Could the Contracting Authority also confirm whether the number of CVs proposed will be assessed as part of the scoring, or whether	The CVs of the Tenderers key personnel are requested as part of a demonstration of evidence that the Tenderer has the necessary resources, knowledge and expertise to meet the Department's requirements. CV details are to be included in the table set out on page 10 of the TRD; additional tables can be included as required.

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	scoring will focus primarily on the relevance, quality, seniority, availability and lot-specific expertise of the named personnel proposed?	It is a matter for the Tenderer to ensure that a sufficient number of CVs are provided to adequately resource the requirement set out for the particular Lot.
Q19.	Flexibility to propose additional experts at assignment stage For Lot 3 in particular, assignments may vary by country, thematic area, methodology, language requirement and fieldwork context. Could the Contracting Authority please clarify whether Framework Members may propose additional suitably qualified experts at a specific assignment stage, where this would be appropriate for the specific assignment, even if those experts were not named in the original framework tender response? If this is permitted, could the Contracting Authority confirm whether such additional experts would be subject to approval by DFAT and required to demonstrate equivalent or relevant qualifications, experience and availability for the specific assignment?	Please refer to our response to Q11.
Q21.	Insurance: In the UK the standard industry limit for Employers Liability provided by most insurers is £10 million which converts to approx. EUR11.606,000. Would this be acceptable to DFAT?	No, it is not acceptable. We would refer you to the insurance limits required, as set out in Section 2.21.1 of the RFT.

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Q22.	References: Can we provide references from previous DFAT projects?	Yes. Tenderers are permitted to provide references from previous DFAT projects.
Q23.	Fee rates: The RFT states that 'the required services will not be delivered in person' and that rates should be inclusive of travel and subsistence. However, Lot 3 describes an average fieldwork component of approximately two weeks per project. Could DFAT clarify whether the 'not in person' statement refers specifically to attendance at DFAT premises, and how tenderers should treat international fieldwork costs when setting their daily rates?"	Please refer to our response to Q2 and associated Tender Amendment Notice, which is available in the 'Contract Documents' Section on eTenders.
Q24.	Fee rates: Please advise if the rates quoted will be the set ceiling rates for the duration of the framework, per role level? For example, will the senior rate be the highest amount DFAT will pay under any future call down?	Please refer to our response to Q3. The rate set for each role will be the maximum applicable rate.
Q25.	Evaluations commissioned: Approximately how many evaluations do DFAT commission per annum?	Based on recent years' work plans, the Evaluation and Audit Unit in DFAT has commissioned approximately three-to-four evaluations, with approximately three other evaluation-related assignments such as quality assurance support, per annum. With the Framework Agreement in place, this number is expected to increase.
Q26.	Future commissioning through the framework: Approximately how many assignments does DFAT intend to commission through the framework for each Lot over the four years?	Please refer to the response to Q27 below.

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Q27.	Total Days Lot 3: Are the 760 days across the Lot 3 framework to be split across all suppliers or is this for each supplier?	A Tender Amendment notice has been issued correcting the reference in Appendix 1 of the RFT (page 23) to the maximum number of days required over the term of the Framework. To confirm the correct maximum number of days is 1,760. This is the maximum number of consultancy days assigned to the Framework over the total duration of 48 months. The number of days will be divided between each mini-competition that is run under the Lots. The Evaluation and Audit Unit estimate that the breakdown of the total number of days for each Lot during the 48-month Framework to be: Lot 1: 225 Lot 2: 85 Lot 3: 1,450 Please note that the estimated total number of days (reflecting multiple project assignments) for each Lot during the 48-month Framework is an approximation only, as DFAT is subject to annual governmental budget provisions that may affect anticipated project assignments. - Lot 1 – <i>“Assignments would ordinarily be discrete tasks of between one and 10 days, potentially over a period of time.”</i> - Lot 2 – <i>“Assignments will be discrete tasks each requiring between two and 20 days, which may not be consecutive.”</i>

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		Lot 3 – <i>“Assignments are ordinarily expected to be of 50–80 days’ duration and could include a field work component averaging ~two weeks (per project)”</i>
Q28.	We note that the specification seeks up to four individual consultants, Lot1, up to three individuals/firms Lot 2 and up to five individuals/firms Lot3. As a consultancy firm with access to a wide range of suitably experienced professionals, we would like to clarify the selection process: if multiple suppliers each present four, three and five CVs respectively, how will the final four, three and five consultants be selected? Will they all be drawn from a single supplier, or could one or two be drawn from different suppliers?	Each Tenderer must submit the CVs of their key personnel proposed to deliver services for each Lot tendered for. Please also refer to the response to Q11. and Q17.
Q29.	We also note that Tenderers should submit the CVs of all the personnel that will be involved in delivering the services under the lot being tendered. Again, as a consulting firm we have wide range of access to suitable consultants and the CVs that we present many not be the most appropriate depending on the particular call down for example in Lot 3. Are you looking for a selection of CVs that represent the calibre of consultants that we can provide? If so, how many CVs do you require?	Please refer to the response to Q11.

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Q30.	Is there a page limit per CV?	A table has been included on page 10 of the TRD for Tenderers to complete CV details. An additional table can be added for each CV.
Q31.	Do the individuals (CVs presented) have to have been involved in the delivery of the two project references given (in response to Section 5. Comparable Experience).	The table included on page 10 of the TRD for CV details requests the following information: <i>“Role and responsibilities in delivering the reference contracts”</i> At least one, if not more, of the key personnel proposed should have been involved in at least one if not both of the project references provided.
Q32.	We note that question 1 in the Tender Response document is the same for all three lots. It seems to most appropriately geared to lot 3. Could DFAT provide indicative prompts or sub-questions for Lots 1 and 2 to assist tenderers in structuring their approach and methodology responses for those lots?"	DFAT will not be adding any further information to Award Criteria 1 in the TRD. It is a matter for Tenderers to structure their response and methodology based on the applicable Lot requirements.
Q33.	Sustainability criterion — The RFT states that services will not be delivered in person. Given this, can DFAT clarify what factors it will consider under the sustainable delivery criterion (criterion 3), and whether this extends beyond carbon/travel to organisational sustainability or social value considerations?	Please see response to Q2 in relation to travel requirements and the associated Tender Amendment Notice, which is available in the ‘Contract Documents’ section on eTenders. Tenderers should demonstrate in a clear and comprehensive manner how they would propose to deliver services from an environmental and sustainable perspective, setting out details of any environmentally friendly or sustainable initiatives that the company adheres to, or they propose to adopt in the provision of the services. Examples may include, but are not limited to: eBilling systems to reduce paper waste; prioritising virtual communication to minimise climate impact through travel, etc.

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Q34.	Travel Costs for Lot 3. Should travel costs be included in our financial proposal, or will travel be reimbursed separately on a call-off basis?	Please refer to the response to Q2 and associated Tender Amendment Notice issued on 30 th June 2026 which is available in the documents section on eTenders.
Q35.	Travel Costs for Lot 3. Which countries is travel anticipated to?	Successful Framework members will be given specific details for each mini-competition under Lot 3 as they arise, including geographical area(s) of project focus that may include Irish Aid's partner countries .
Q36.	Travel Costs for Lot 3. Will travel insurance be covered by Irish DFA?	No. Please refer to our response to Q8 and associated Tender Amendment Notice issued on 30 th June 2026 which is available in the documents section on eTenders.
Q37.	Local Consultants for Lot 3 Should we only propose international team members at this stage?	Please refer to our response to Q11 and Q35.
Q38.	Local Consultants for Lot 3 As the geographical scope of future assignments is unknown, it is difficult to identify relevant local consultants in advance. Can local experts instead be proposed as part of individual call-off assignments, where relevant?	Please refer to our response to Q11 and Q35.

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Q39.	Junior Consultant for Lot 3 Is it correctly understood that while we may submit a daily rate for junior consultants (less than 5 years' experience), the proposal should only include CV's for senior consultants with 5+ years' experience?	Please refer to our responses to Q11 and Q35. As set out in Appendix 1 (Required Qualifications and Skills) on page 20 of the RFT, Tenderers must demonstrate (among other essential requirements), <i>“Individual experience—minimum five years—of evaluative practice in international development and/or international relations, foreign policy and trade. “</i> A Tender Amendment Notice will be issued to correct the table in Appendix 2 of the Pricing Schedule and the Tender Amendment Notice issued on 30th June 2026. The TRD will also be updated to reflect this correction.
Q40.	CV Format May tenderers use their own CV template, provided it includes all the information requested in the Authority's template?	CV details are to be included in the table set out on page 10 of the TRD; additional tables can be included as required.
Q41.	CV Format If use of the Authority's template is mandatory, could you please clarify the distinction between some of the requested fields, as several appear to overlap (e.g. Summary of key skills and expertise versus Summary of key experiences)?	Key skills and expertise are distinct from key experiences. Per the RFT Appendix 1, it is noted that Applicants for the Framework Agreement must demonstrate the essential requirements listed. Then, depending on the Lot, Applicants must in addition demonstrate they have specific experience (of which has built or developed skills as a result) to deliver the services required.

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		Tenderers are required to complete the table included on page 10 of the TRD for CV details. An additional table can be added for each CV.
Q42.	CV Format Is it mandatory for all evaluation experts proposed (for Lot 3) to have been involved in the 2 company references (this is implied in the CV template section "Role and responsibilities in delivering the reference contracts"), or can CVs for evaluation experts be included who were not personally involved in these references?	Please refer to the response to Q31.
Q43.	Reference Contracts Must the reference contracts have been completed, or may tenderers also include ongoing assignments that demonstrate the required experience?	As set out on page 16 of the RFT: <i>"Two comparable and relevant reference contracts completed in the past five years must be provided."</i>
Q44.	Reference Contracts May tenderers rely on an ongoing framework agreement as a reference contract, provided that the reference is based solely on evaluation assignments that have already been completed, delivered and accepted by the client under that framework?	Yes. Tenderers can provide a reference in relation to contracts for work that have been completed.

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Q45.	Could you confirm the scope of 'suitable alternative documentation' referenced at RFT Part 3.2 (a) for tenderers unable to meet the stated turnover threshold for a valid reason please? E.g. sole practitioners or recently established consultancies.	As set out in Section 4 (Financial and Economic Standing) of the TRD: <i>“Prior to and as a condition of the award of any contract the tenderer will upon request provide the Contracting Authority with documentary evidence demonstrating that they fulfil this criterion. Documentary evidence may include financial accounts (or audited financial accounts where the tenderer’s accounts are audited) or an accountant’s letter/certificate confirming that the applicant fulfils this criterion.”</i> All tenderers are required to meet the economic and financial stability requirements published in the RFT and as amended in the Tender Amendment Notice issued on 3rd July 2026. If a tenderer cannot meet the turnover requirement for a stated legitimate reason, the tenderer must decide on suitable alternative evidence they deem appropriate to prove their economic and financial stability. To meet the alternative evidence requirements, the Tenderer’s presented information must unequivocally and clearly demonstrate equivalent financial capacity and stability. The Department reserves the right to evaluate the alternative information and has the sole discretion to either accept or reject such alternative evidence provided by the tenderer.
Q46.	Could you provide an indication of the anticipated Commencement Date of the Framework Agreement, and provide an indicative time frame for when the first mini-competition under each Lot is expected to be issued?	The Framework is expected to be in place by Q4. The Department anticipates at least one project under each Lot to begin before the end of Q4 2026.

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Q47	We would be grateful for clarification on Lot 1 eligibility. Paragraph 1.4 of the RFT notes that a minimum of three and a maximum of five "individuals/firms" will be appointed as Framework Members to each Lot. We observe that in Appendix 1 (Requirements and Specifications), the descriptions for Lot 2 and Lot 3 both refer to "individuals/firms," while the description for Lot 1 refers only to "individual consultants." Please confirm whether a firm (economic operator) is eligible to submit a tender for Lot 1, proposing a team of no more than four named individual consultants to deliver the services; or whether Lot 1 is only intended for natural persons tendering in their own capacity.	An individual economic operator or a firm can participate in Lot 1. The distinction between Lot 1 and Lots 2 and 3 is that each project under Lot 1 will require only one individual, and not a team of persons that could be required under Lots 2 and 3.
Q48.	Please can you clarify whether firms can apply for Lot 1 and be a Framework Member or whether only individuals will be selected as such? The RfT for Lot 1 states 'seeking individual consultants' whereas Lots 2 and 3 states 'seeking individuals/firms'.	Please see response to Q47.
Q49.	If firms may propose individual consultants for Lot 1, please confirm that, if the individuals are selected, DFAT can enter into a Framework Agreement or Services Contract with them through the firm, not with them directly.	The Department will only enter into an agreement directly with Framework Members and not their employees/subcontractors.

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Q50.	If firms may apply for Lot 1, should they provide four CVs of proposed individuals? Is it acceptable to propose more - or fewer?	Please see our response to Q18.
Q51.	Please can you clarify the requirements of question 1: are suppliers required to provide only the approach and methodology for delivering the services procured through mini competitions or call-off (i.e. Senior Technical Advisory Support and QA, building evaluation capacity and culture or evaluations)? Or should the response also include the approach and methodology for managing / responding to call off requests and mini competitions?	Under Award Criteria 1 in Section 6 of the TRD, as anticipated projects are to be determined, Tenderers are invited to provide an approach and methodology to the relevant Lot(s) based on information provided in Appendix 1 of the RFT, namely in response to the information contained under the Lot description and 'Indicative Area(s) of Work', 'Anticipated Outputs/ Deliverables', and 'Specific Experience/Skills Required'.
Q52.	In Q1, What does 'contract management' mean: Is it an approach to managing a contract arising from a mini competition, or is this framework management i.e. how we respond to a call down?	The reference to 'contract management' under Award Criteria 1 in Section 6 of the TRD refers to management of a contract awarded following mini-competition under a Lot.
Q53.	How will work under Lots 1 and 2 be awarded? Will there be mini competitions between Framework Members or will work be directly awarded?	Work under each Lot will be awarded via a mini-competition process with the Framework Members of that particular Lot.
Q54.	Should the Tenderer's Statement (Appendix 3) also be submitted as a separate attachment as the ESPD?	Appendix 3 (Tenderer's Statement) of the RFT is included within Section 3 of the Tender Response Document (TRD). Tenderers must complete and submit it as part of the TRD.

Ref No	Question	Contracting Authority Response
Q55.	Quoted rates need to include all costs including expenses but are largely unknown at this stage for Lot 3. We will have to work on a set of underpinning assumptions and would like to include those assumptions in our offer, for transparency. Is this acceptable. Alternatively, please could DFAT consider providing assumptions for basing expense estimations on, so that all suppliers can work to a common framework to enable cost comparison? Or consider requesting suppliers to provide a fee rate, rather than a blended one, at this stage in the procurement process?	The submitted daily fee rates cannot be subject to any pre-conditions. The financial evaluation of Tenderers will be based on their submitted daily fee rate as set out in Appendix 2 of the RFT and under Award Criteria 4 in the TRD and as amended in the Tender Amendment Notice issued on 30th June 2026. Please also see our response to Q2 and Q7.
Q56.	This request applies also to Lot 2 if expenses are anticipated. Are any expenses anticipated for Lot 2 costings, arising for example from travel to deliver training in person?	Please see our response to Q54 above and to Q2.
Q57.	The RFT does not mention familiarity with DFAT as a required or desirable qualification or skill. Are applications therefore welcome from those unfamiliar with DFAT or would this unfamiliarity place such suppliers at a disadvantage in the selection process?	It is not a requirement to have previous experience with DFAT projects. Tenders are permitted from those unfamiliar with DFAT. All Tenderers whether they have previous experience on DFAT projects or not must demonstrate that they meet the requirements set out in the RFT.
Q58.	We have done extensive work that falls within the requirements for Lot 2. This has typically be distributed across several contracts, and typically 1 part of a larger contract. May we combine work done for 1 client under several contracts, and use this as 1 individual reference contract?	The requirement set out on page 16 of the RFT is for <i>“Two comparable and relevant reference contracts completed in the past five years”</i> . If relevant individual pieces of work completed have been a part of one contract, it is suitable to submit this information as a reference contract, clarifying such. However, you may not combine work done for one client under several contracts, and use this as one individual reference contract.

Ref No	Question	Contracting Authority Response
Q59.	Is there a page limit for CVs?	No. Please refer to our response to Q30.
Q60.	Regarding the CV format included on P.16 of the TRD, please kindly advise on what is expected as a response to the sub-heading "Justification for the appointment".	'Justification for the appointment' refers to reason for putting forward this person's CV (e.g., why their skillset/experiences are most applicable for the role). If the Tenderer is an individual applying on their own behalf, they can include this information for themselves, also.
Q61.	With reference to Section 3.2 (b) of the RFT (Technical and Professional Ability) requiring tenderers to provide details of two comparable and relevant reference contracts completed in the past five years. Could you please clarify whether: a. A single contract comprising of multiple distinct and substantial evaluation deliverables carried out over the past five years would be accepted. For example, could due diligence/appraisal work followed by a separate programme evaluation be treated as satisfying the requirement for two comparable reference contracts, given the comparable scope of the evaluation work involved; or b. The requirement for two separate reference contracts is strict regardless of the scale and duration of a single relevant contract, and if so, whether tenderers may present the distinct evaluation deliverables within that one contract	Tenderers are to provide references in the format set out in Section 5 (Technical and Professional Ability and Capacity) of the TRD. A two-page count limit applies per reference. a. No. The requirement set out on page 16 of the RFT is for "Two comparable and relevant reference contracts completed in the past five years." These must be two distinct contracts. b. Yes. Please refer to our response to a., above.

Ref No	Question	Contracting Authority Response
	as sub-references to demonstrate the relevant technical and professional ability.	
Q62.	Declaration of Personal Circumstances (Appendix 4): Should this be submitted by the nominated lead entity alone, or separately by each consortium member / subcontractor?	Please refer to the response to Q15.
Q63.	In the reference contract tables under the Technical and Professional Ability and Capacity section of the TRD, tenderers are asked to complete both a "Contract Performance" field and a separate "Contract Performance Measurement" field. As these terms are not defined in the RFT or TRD, we would be grateful for clarification on the distinction between them — specifically, what information the Contracting Authority expects tenderers to provide under each heading	In the reference contracts table in Section 5 of the TRD are two fields: 'Contract Performance' and 'Contract Performance Measurement'. 'Contract Performance' refers to the deliverables identified in relation to the specific contract and how they were achieved. 'Contract Performance Measurement' refers to the key performance indicators and/or measurable service-level agreement elements used to track project delivery, as agreed in the contract.
Q64.	We understand that we are to follow the CV format as given in the TRD. Would it be acceptable to move the point "Details of comparable assignments managed during career" to the end?	No. CV details are to be provided in the table format set out on page 10 of the TRD.
Q65.	The TRD states that the combined Senior Consultant and Junior Consultant daily rates will be used for financial evaluation purposes. Moreover, Q24 clarifies that the submitted daily rates will constitute the maximum applicable rates for each role for the duration of the	For each individual Lot, the estimated number of days indicated is based on an approximation of anticipated projects to be undertaken during the Framework period. In addition, the maximum contract value for each Lot is likewise based on this approximation of anticipated projects and related estimated number of days for each project.

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	Framework (subject only to inflation adjustments). For Lot 3, the indicative maximum contract value and estimated number of consultant days imply an average daily rate that appears substantially below the combined value of market rates typically associated with the senior and junior consultants of the calibre required under the Framework Agreement. Could the Contracting Authority please clarify whether the indicative contract value and estimated number of consultant days are intended to inform the expected combined Senior and Junior Consultant daily rate submitted for financial evaluation?	The indicative contract value and estimated number of consultant days should not necessarily inform the expected Senior and Junior Consultant daily rates.
Q66.	Could the Contracting Authority please clarify if the Tenderer's Statement (section 3 of TRD) and Financial and Economic Standing (section 4 of TRD) can be signed only by the nominated entity authorised to represent the whole group, or if each member of the grouping should sign too?	The nominated entity authorised to represent the consortium should sign Section 3 (Tenderer's Statement) and Section 4 (Financial and Economic Standing).
Q67.	Clarification Q47 states that assignments under Lot 1 are expected to be delivered by one individual, rather than by a team of consultants as may be required under Lots 2 and 3. However, the TRD is common to all three Lots and requires tenderers to provide both Senior Consultant and Junior Consultant daily rates, as well as corresponding CVs.	If Tenderers for Lot 1 are presenting one consultant only then it must be a Senior consultant. Tenderers for Lot 1 will then all be evaluated based on the Senior Consultant rate.

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	Could the Contracting Authority please clarify whether, for Lot 1, it is mandatory to submit a Junior Consultant daily rate and CV?	
Q68	CV submission format and page limit The responses to Q30 and Q40 clarify that CV details are to be included in the table set out in the TRD and that additional tables may be added as required. Could the Contracting Authority please confirm whether completion of the CV tables in the TRD is sufficient, or whether full CVs should also be submitted as separate annexes? In addition, is there any page limit applicable to the CV tables and/or any CV annexes?	For each individual CV that a Tenderer is submitting in the TRD, the Tenderer should add an additional table as CV details must be returned in the format presented in the TRD. If separate CV documents are submitted with a TRD they will not be considered as part of the evaluation.
Q69	Supporting evidence for CVs Under Award Criterion 2, should CVs be supported by additional evidence, such as evaluation reports, publications or other supporting material, or is a list of relevant publications and/or links within the CV sufficient?	A list of relevant publications and/or links within the CV is sufficient.
Q70	Sample evaluation report The TRD refers to a “sample evaluation report, or equivalent”. Could the Contracting Authority please confirm whether one sample report is sufficient for a Lot 1 submission?	As set out under Award Criteria 1 on page 9 of the TRD, Tenderers are to provide ‘ <i>a sample report, or equivalent prepared for one of the above-mentioned reference clients</i> ’. The requirement is to provide one (1) sample as an appendix to the TRD.

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	Please also see Q69 above regarding the submission of supporting evidence for expert experience and expertise.	
Q71.	Lot 3 Junior Consultant: The response to Clarification Question 39 resulted in issuing a tender amendment notice correcting the table in Appendix 2 of the Pricing Schedule. This revision states that Junior consultants should have 5 years' experience whilst Senior Consultants should have over 5. Consultants will gain years of experience throughout the duration of the Framework. Thus, a Junior Consultant with 5 years experience in July 2026 will have six years experience (and thus technically be a Senior Consultant) a year later. On award of a Services Contract, how will the appropriate rate be determined? Will the rate applicable to an individual be determined by the number of years experience they had at the point of the supplier becoming a Framework Member, or at the point of the supplier being awarded a Services Contract?	Please refer to the response to Q3 regarding stated daily rates. Tenderers will be evaluated based on the information presented in their submissions. The personnel presented as Junior or Senior will be expected to remain in place for the duration of the framework. 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.
Q72.	Evaluation of Cost / Junior Consultants: The response to clarification Q4 states that the cost rates supplied will be added to provide a Total Figure, which will be used for financial evaluation purposes. a) Please can DFAT state explicitly whether suppliers can choose to submit a Senior Consultant rate only? This is particularly relevant	a) Please see our response to Q47 and Q67. b) Yes. Please refer to our response to Q11 regarding submission of CVs. Please note that for this Tender a junior consultant must meet the minimum requirements of five (5) years experience but they can have more.

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	given that Junior Consultants must have exactly five years experience (not more or less) which might not be feasible for some suppliers to provide. b) We assume that if a Junior Consultant rate is provided, a corresponding CV (i.e. of a consultant with five years experience) must also be provided - please confirm. c) If suppliers may elect not to submit a Junior Consultant fee rate (and CV), please can DFAT confirm that there will be no weighting or averaging of the cost rates supplied, as implied by the response to CQ4. i.e. a supplier who submits a Senior Consultant rate only will have that rate compared directly to the sum of the Senior and Junior Consultant rates submitted by another supplier.	c) Please see response to part a.
Q73.	Technical response Q1: Q1 of the tender response is to 'enclose a Project Implementation Plan for a completed project'. Is this plan to be included within the 4-page response or can it be an appendix, like the 'enclosed ... sample evaluation report'?	In response to Award Criteria 1, Tenderers are asked to submit their typical approach and methodology for the Lot being tendered for. A Project Implementation Plan can be a Gantt chart/schedule of tasks from a completed project, to ensure maximum page limit of four is not exceeded (as a full inception report/evaluation plan would likely exceed the four-page limit).
Q74.	Technical response Q1: Is it the expectation that the requested Project Implementation Plan is a Gantt chart / schedule of tasks and their timing, or a whole inception report/plan for an evaluation, or something else?	Please see response to Q73.

Ref No	Question	Contracting Authority Response
Q75	Suppliers for Lot 1: Following the answer to CQ47, where DFAT confirms that firms may apply for Lot 1, if several firms are selected for the framework, how does DFAT expect to identify the individual consultants to deliver the services? e.g. will DFAT select four individuals from across the successful firms to deliver the services? or Will it want to appoint four individuals from each firm?	Contracts awarded under each Lot of the Framework will be done via a mini-competition process among the Framework Members of the relevant Lot. The Framework Members will be contacted in regards to the mini-competition, where it is a firm, it is up to them to express interest by applying for it and nominating the individual consultant for consideration (whose CV should have been submitted as part of the Tenderer's application for this RFT, but please also see response to Q11).
Q76	Would it be at all possible to extend the deadline for this tender by a week?	The tender submission deadline has been extended to 18:00hrs on 23rd July 2026. A Tender Amendment Notice has been issued to confirm this change.