

The Contracting Authority has provided a Response Questionnaire as a separate document for Applicants to use in preparing their response. This document and format **MUST** be used.

LONGFORD COUNTY COUNCIL

REQUEST TO PARTICIPATE IN A PANEL TO DELIVER TRAINING SERVICES FOR LOCAL ENTERPRISE OFFICE LONGFORD

Scope of Panel

Local Enterprise Office Longford invites applications from suitably qualified and experienced training providers to join a panel of trainers for the delivery of future training programmes, workshops, seminars, mentoring and business development supports to clients of Local Enterprise Office Longford.

The panel will operate for a two-year period from **1 January 2027 to 31 December 2028**. Training requirements may cover a broad range of business topics, including start-up support, business growth, management development, digitalisation, sustainability, sales and marketing, financial management, innovation and other areas relevant to the needs of small businesses and entrepreneurs.

Procedure

The current Framework Agreement will expire on 31 December 2026 and will be replaced by this new Training Services Panel. Appointment to the panel does not guarantee any minimum level of work, and training assignments will be awarded in accordance with the requirements of Local Enterprise Office Longford during the panel term.

Applications are invited from individuals and organisations with the appropriate qualifications, expertise and proven experience in the provision of business training and facilitation services. Applications will be evaluated using the Most Economically Advantageous Tender (MEAT) methodology, with assessment based on quality and price criteria as set out in the tender documentation.

Contact for Queries

Questions and Answers facility on www.etenders.gov.ie

Format for Application

Applications to be returned through the Entenders platform by filling out and uploading the tender response questionnaire document

Please note that information relating to this Invitation to 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.

Responses to queries will be circulated to all Applicants via www.etenders.gov.ie. The identity of the person making a query will not be disclosed when circulating the response.

Please note that the Contracting Authority accepts no responsibility for information relayed (or not relayed) via third parties.

The Contracting Authority has provided a Tender Response Questionnaire as a separate document for Applicants to use in preparing their response. This document and format MUST be used.

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Disclaimer

All information contained in this document is provided for the purpose of facilitating the production and submission of Applications.

Applicants are recommended to read the document thoroughly. While all reasonable steps have been taken to ensure that the information set out in this document is factually correct, no representation or warranty, expressed or implied, is or will be made or given in relation to the accuracy or the completeness of any information contained in this document or otherwise provided by or on behalf of Longford County Council (hereinafter “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 this document, or for the information contained in this document, 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 Contracting Authority has any authority to give or make any representation or warranty, expressed 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.

Without prejudice to the principle of equal treatment, the Contracting Authority is not obliged to engage in a clarification process in respect of Applications with missing or incomplete information. Therefore, Applicants are advised to ensure that they return a comprehensive Application in order to avoid the risk of elimination from the Panel.

1. ABOUT THE AWARDING AUTHORITY

1.1 The Contracting Authority

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

The Contracting Authority is carrying out this procurement on behalf of the Local Enterprise Office Longford (otherwise LEO Longford). LEO Longford promotes the development of enterprise and small business creation across County Longford.

LEO Longford is one of thirty-one dedicated LEOs across the Local Authority network in Ireland and supports people who are interested in starting up a new business or who are already in business including entrepreneurs, early-stage promoters and small businesses looking to expand.

LEO Longford provides a range of services including Business Advice, Information, Training & Management Development Consultancy, Networking, Mentoring, Financial Supports and Sector Specific Supports.

Log on to:

LEO Longford <https://www.localenterprise.ie/Longford>

Local Enterprise www.localenterprise.ie

1.2 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.

Applicants 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 Panel / contract.

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

2. GENERAL INFORMATION & REQUIREMENTS

2.1 General Information

The purpose of this procedure is to establish a Panel of Trainers for the provision of Training Services for the Local Enterprise Office in Longford County Council.

LEO Longford is compiling a panel of trainers, from which future training programmes, workshops and seminars for a 2-year period (with the option to extend it to a 3rd year dependent on satisfactory experience) will be selected. Applications are invited from those with appropriate skills and experience that wish to be included in the LEO Longford Training panel.

The proposed Training Services include but are not limited to those set out in section below.

2.2 Detailed Specification of Requirements

The Longford Local Enterprise Office serves as a first stop shop to provide support and services to start, grow and develop micro and small businesses in County Longford. LEO Longford Training Services are aimed at improving owner-manager skills to assist the survival and growth of micro-businesses.

As per the Enterprise Development Plan, the provision of training is a fundamental aspect of LEO supports to entrepreneurs in the county. The Local Enterprise Office currently provides a wide range of training opportunities for the small business manager/owner, all of which are highly subsidised. These training programs equip entrepreneurs, owners and managers with the knowledge to plan, grow and sustain productivity, innovation and competitiveness.

The workshops/programmes/seminars will be held at various locations and venues across County Longford or remotely using video conferencing tools.

Applications are invited from competent persons with relevant experience, expertise and qualifications across all lots as noted in section 3.2 and the Tender Response Document. Applicants are also required to indicate the Lot[s] they are tendering for.

Applicants are also required to indicate the **Lot[s]** they are tendering for.
Suppliers can tender for 1 or more lots subject to a maximum of 5 Lots.

Applicants should also indicate which sub lot they have relevant experience in within each Lot.

2.3 Duration of the Panel

The Panel established under each LOT will be for two years (with the option of a third year) from January 1st 2027.

2.4 Awarding of Contracts

Assignments under the LOTS will be allocated to as follows:

a. By selection of the most suitable tenderer available in the relevant LOT for the particular assignment on the basis of their expertise as set out in their Application. The training courses are

subject to budget constraints and client demand.

b. Where the nominated person is not available due to existing commitments then LEO Longford will allocate the assignment/course to the next most appropriate person, based on their experience and level of training contained within the Application.

c. Also, where appropriate LEO Longford reserves the right to conduct a mini tender competition with a minimum of 3 panel members capable of delivering the services [subject to that number being on the panel]. Mini competitions will be conducted in line with public procurement requirements and awarded on the basis of the most suitable trainer and the skills required for the project/approach to be delivered.

2.5 Additional Programmes & Other Requirements

As and when additional programmes arise over the life of the Panel, LEO Longford will either award these programmes to the initial firm identified to deliver the programme or identify the most appropriate service provider on the panel based on availability, reliability & quality of programme / trainer based on the specific needs and by reference to the original tenders.

Other Requirements Which Arise

LEO Longford recognises that training & business needs are constantly evolving and this in turn may require changes to our training offerings. Where new training requirements are identified, LEO Longford may run a mini-tender among the most suitable panel members based on changing needs emerging and by reference to the original tenders.

LEO Longford reserves therefore, the right to run a mini-tender competition for additional training programmes falling within the scope of this contract at all times.

LEO Longford reserves the right to terminate this contract award process any time at its sole discretion. LEO Longford will not be responsible for any costs incurred by applicants in the tendering process.

2.6 Contract Management

The Contracting Authority requires applicants to nominate a dedicated contract manager who will act as the main point of contact for the duration of the panel. This person shall have the authority to deal with all matters in relation to contracts and be responsible for the satisfactory delivery of the supplies/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.
- 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: Applicants should note that contract management activities will be non-billable.

2.7 Termination of Panel & Contracts Awarded

The Contracting Authority reserves the right at its sole discretion to terminate any contract where circumstances outside its control, render the commercial arrangement uncompetitive.

2.8 Right to Tender outside of the Panel

The Contracting Authority intends to use the Panel for the procurement of requirements falling within its scope during the specified period; however, it reserves the right to go outside the Panel for the procurement of any requirement without reference to the Panel Members. Admission to a Panel does not guarantee the award of any contract to any economic operator, nor does it give the member[s] the right to be consulted in respect of any contract.

2.9 Compliance with the Terms and Conditions of the Panel

Admission to the Panel will be conditional upon acceptance of the Contracting Authority's Terms and Conditions.

The Contracting Authority reserves the right to confirm that the financial and technical capacity of the Applicant is valid and unchanged prior to the award of any contract.

2.10 Reporting Requirements

Trainers will report to the Head of LEO Longford or his/her designate and will provide a detailed report on courses/workshops delivered to include brief for the course/workshop dates, attendance and feedback sheets and any further information that may be required in keeping with the delivery of the role. The preparation of these training courses/workshops and reports will be undertaken in the trainer's own time. Payment will be subject to receipt of the completed course and relevant documentation.

3. ESTABLISHMENT AND OPERATION OF THE PANEL

3.1 Establishment of the Panel

The Contracting Authority proposes to engage in a process for the establishment of a Panel.

Interested parties are required to complete and submit the Tender Response Document provided. Responses received will be evaluated based on the Applicant meeting the criteria as set out in this document below.

Inclusion on the Panel does not constitute a contract and the Contracting Authority cannot guarantee that a contract will be awarded to any member of the Panel.

3.2 Scope of Requirements

To facilitate clients, LEO Longford's training programmes may be delivered on any day from Monday to Friday and at any time during the morning, afternoon or evening and will determine the optimal time and date for each course. LEO Longford reserves the right to cancel or postpone a course if participant numbers are insufficient or if unforeseen conditions arise.

Applicants should note that, subject to the Contracting Authority's obligations at law, it may seek future enhancements or changes to the training Services, which are expected to be related or ancillary to the Services and which may include the development and delivery of additional training. Any such enhancements or changes will be paid for on the basis of the fees tendered for the Services and fees payable will not increase unless otherwise agreed by the Contracting Authority and the successful panel member(s). Any anticipated volumes of work set out in this CFT do not guarantee any work or volume of work to the successful tenderer(s) and are for indicative purposes only.

All training materials and handouts will be suitable for the topic in question and will be provided by the trainer. Trainers must show a commitment to LEO Longford Branding - displaying of LEO logos on all handout materials, slides and documentation where possible. Logos to be provided to trainers.

LEO Longford may request that follow-up sessions are provided to participants as part of the programmes delivered under each of the LOTS. Applicants will have the option to price for follow up sessions at the time of scheduling.

The listing below is an indication of programmes under consideration and which may be scheduled subject to demand and/or availability of funding.

Lot 1: Start Your Own Business

The objective of the SYOB programme is to assist participants in developing an understanding of the issues involved in becoming self-employed and to facilitate them in developing a business plan to establish the potential viability of their business. SYOB may be delivered as daytime/evening courses - Monday to Friday.

Please indicate which of the following sublots you have relevant experience and are competent in delivering training on:

Lot 1 SYOB Start Your Own Business			
Business Start Up Fundamentals		Business Planning	
Researching your Product Idea / Idea Generation		Business Idea and Development	
Research & Development		Commercialisation	
Resources Management		Product Development	
Branding and Packaging		Digital Media	
Sales and Marketing		Pricing and Costings	
Working and Living as a Self-Employed Person		Legal aspects of a business, IP, Trademarks etc	
Presentation and Pitching Skills		Understanding Consumer Trends	
LEAN Business Canvas		Building your Team – Introduction to HR	
Finance and Taxation		Developing a Winning Business Plan	
SYOB + (Follow on Training Support		Other (please state)	

Lot 2: Business Management & Owner Management Development Programmes

Under this lot, courses should cover a range of different business related topics.

Please indicate which of the following sublots you have relevant experience and are competent in delivering training on:

Lot 2 Business Management & Owner Management Development Programmes			
Business Planning & Management		Manufacturing /Production	
Supply Chain Management		Business Expansion Processes	
Research & Development		Quality Management	
Franchising		Succession Planning	
Lean Principles		Resource Management	
HR & Team Management		Innovation	
Process Engineering		Communications & PR	
Leadership & Company Culture		Tendering For Business / Public Procurement	
Costing / Pricing		GDPR	
Product Design & Development		Pitching/Presentation/Communication Skills	
Commercialisation		Working and Living as a Self-Employed Person	
Resilience in the Workplace		Managing Stress in the Workplace	
Cyber Security		Other (please state)	

Lot 3: Finance for SMEs

The Finance training courses and workshops aim to assist micro-business owner/managers in developing their financial understanding. They will equip participants with the skills to manage various financial responsibilities for small business owner/managers. Some of the courses should include (but not necessarily limited to) a range of the following topics:

Please indicate which of the following sublots you have relevant experience and are competent in delivering training on:

Lot 3 Finance for SMEs			
Basic Bookkeeping - Manual & Computerised		VAT	
		Computerised Accounts	
Taxation		General Banking for Businesses	
ROS (Revenue Online Services)		Pensions	
Accounting Software		Costing/Pricing	
Preference Share Management		Pitching for Investment/ Borrowing	
Succession Planning		Developing a Winning Business Plan	
Funding (Sources, Grants Applications, Drawdown etc.)		VAT registration, Income Tax & Tax compliancy	
Financial Management/Cashflow		Credit Control	
Financial Management for Entrepreneurs		Debt Management	
Preparing for a Revenue Audit		Sage 50 Accounts Programme	
		Other (please state)	

Lot 4: Sales and Marketing

Programmes delivered under this lot will enable participants to properly market their business, make sure they have a clear marketing strategy in place, develop and promote their business' brand, and ultimately drive sales as a result.

Please indicate which of the following sublots you have relevant experience and are competent in delivering training on:

Lot 4 Sales and Marketing			
Lead Generation/Sales		Packaging	
Growth Strategy		Market Entry / Route to Market	
New Software Applications		Branding	
Product Design		Account Management of Clients	
Market Research		Marketing Budgets	
Strategic Planning		How To Sell Your Brand	
Presentation and Pitching Skills		Advertising	
Data Analysis		Import/Export	
Selling Online		Podcasts	
Communication		Sales & Negotiation Techniques	
Content Creation		Product & Business Photography	
Developing & Reviewing a Marketing Strategy		Other (please state)	

Lot 5: Social-Media & Digital Marketing

Programmes delivered under this Lot will provide participants with an understanding of how to use the various Social Media platforms, at both a beginner and advanced level, to promote their business. They should also provide business owners with useful social media tips that will enable them to engage more productively and creatively with social media.

Please indicate which of the following sublots you have relevant experience and are competent in delivering training on:

Lot 5 Social-Media & Digital Marketing			
Google Analytics		Digital Planning & Management	
Search Engine Optimization		ChatGPT	
Selling Online		Brand & Visual Storytelling	
Email Marketing		Social Media Reels	
Online Marketing Videos		Digital Marketing Platforms for Business:	
Podcasting		• Facebook	
Social Media Tools and Strategies		• Twitter	
Content Creation		• LinkedIn	
Google Tools		• Instagram	
How to Market Online		• TikTok	
Canva		• Snapchat	
Artificial Intelligence		Other (please state)	

Lot 6: Human Resources

Employees are the most viable asset a company has. Courses delivered under this Lot will provide participants with an insight into the management of staff in their business.

Please indicate which of the following sublots you have relevant experience and are competent in delivering training on:

Lot 6 Human Resources			
Interviewing & Recruitment		Employment Law	
Employee Motivation		Performance Management	
Communication		Safety & Wellness	
Managing your Personal Safety at Work		Other (please state)	

Lot 7: Food & Drink Sector

Training under this Lot are aimed at entrepreneurs and SME's in the food and drink sector. The courses should help participants learn about various aspects of running a food business such as food safety and regulatory requirements, market research and branding, sustainability, marketing, finance, and distribution.

Please indicate which of the following sublots you have relevant experience and are competent in delivering training on:

Lot 7 Food & Drink Sectors			
Market Research / Marketing		Food Tourism	
Labelling and Sustainable Packaging		Product Design	
Branding		Import/Export/Distribution Home & Abroad	
Environmental Awareness / Sustainable Business Practices		Innovative Sustainability Product Development	
Selling at Farmers Markets		Food Trucks (Set-up and legislation)	
Food Business Development Programmes		Food Safety Training	
Food Starter Programme		Food Hygiene Training	
How to Scale up your Food Business		HACCP	
Product Photography		Other (please state)	

Lot 8: Design / Craft / Creative Sectors

Under this Lot, training courses will be tailored for businesses in the design / craft and creative sectors.

Please indicate which of the following sublots you have relevant experience and are competent in delivering training on:

Lot 8 Design / Craft / Creative Sectors			
Growth strategy		Import / Export	
Branding / Brand Development		Strategic Planning	
Product Design		Maximising Your Income	
Merchandising for Trade Shows / Pop-up Shops		Marketing & Selling Online	
Sustainable Business Practices		New Product Development	
Product Photography		Other (please state)	

Lot 9: Web Development

Under this Lot, programmes should help participants better manage their websites. Programmes are aimed at businesses planning a new website or updating an existing website. Through these programmes, participants should gain a good understanding of the processes involved in developing a new or upgrading an ecommerce website, website maintenance, running an online business and the Trading Online Voucher (TOV) Scheme. Participants should gain skills required to develop their website for easy navigation to help secure new customers and maintain existing ones.

Please indicate which of the following sublots you have relevant experience and are competent in delivering training on:

Lot 9 Web Development / SEO / Technology			
Website Design & Development		Quality of ICT Proposal	
Trading Online Voucher Information Sessions		How to Make your Website Work for You	
Google Analytics		Ecommerce	
Maintaining Your Website		App Development	
Cyber Security		Artificial Intelligence	
Search Engine Optimization		Google Tools	
		Other (please state)	

Lot 10: IP / Legal Services including Patents, Trademark

This Lot focuses on the legal requirements of Business owners. Participants should gain knowledge of areas such as Patents, Copyright, Intellectual Property and more.

Please indicate which of the following sublots you have relevant experience and are competent in delivering training on:

Lot 10 IP / Legal Services including Patents, Trademark			
Patents		Trademarks	
Copyright		Intellectual Property	
Investor readiness		Commercialisation	
MVP Development		Growth strategy	
GDPR		Other (please state)	

Lot 11: Health, Wellbeing & Fitness

This Lot focuses on Small Business Owners Health, Wellbeing & Fitness to cope and thrive in today's business environment.

Please indicate which of the following sublots you have relevant experience and are competent in delivering training on:

Lot 11 Health, Wellbeing & Fitness			
Time Management		Meditation	
Mindfulness / Wellness		Nutrition	
Work-life Balance		Other (please state)	

Lot 12: Exporting / Brexit / Supply Chain & Logistics

Under this Lot, courses should help participants with all areas around exporting and prepare them to expand into international markets. Whether they are beginning their export journey or want to discuss tariffs and customs, training should give a greater insight into regulations and requirements for internationalisation of exporting.

Please indicate which of the following sublots you have relevant experience and are competent in delivering training on:

Lot 12 Exporting / Supply Chain & Logistics			
Growth Strategy		Strategic Planning	
Import/Export Potential		Managing Risk	
Customs Procedures / Regulations		Cashflow & Currency	
Supply Chain Management		Brexit Supports	
Custom Agents		Licensing	
New Market Development / Route to Market		Importing Procedures (I.e. Tariffs, Customs, HS Classification, VAT Status, Customs Documentation etc.)	
Cross Border Trading		Contract Law	
Customer Value and Service		Operations and Logistics Management	
Purchasing and Procurement in a Commercial Environment		Other (please state)	

Lot 13: Green Business

Training under this Lot are aimed at participants who wish to make their business more sustainable. Trainers should be aware of the various supports available through the Local Enterprise Office such as the Green for Micro Programme.

Please indicate which of the following sublots you have relevant experience and are competent in delivering training on:

Lot 13 Green Business			
Environmental Awareness		Innovative Sustainability	
Business / Process Innovation under a Green Agenda		Change Management Relating to Green Business Processes	
Sustainable Business Practices		Climate Change Impacts	
Carbon Footprint		Green Strategies	
Energy conservation		Green Procurement	
Green Distribution		Green Marketing Awareness	
Circular Economy		Other (please state)	

Lot 14: Retail Sector / Tourism Business

Under this Lot, training should help participants build and expand their retail or tourism business.

Please indicate which of the following sublots you have relevant experience and are competent in delivering training on:

Lot 14 Retail Sector / Tourism Business			
Customer Service		Retail Supports	
Growth Strategy		Routes to Market – Retail Sector	
Sustainable Business Practices		Understanding of Retail Businesses	
Distribution Home & Abroad		Management Skills for Retail Sector	
Visual Merchandising		Routes to Market – Tourism Sector	
Marketing & Selling Online		Understanding of Tourism Businesses	
Branding & Sustainable Packaging		Tourism Supports (Particularly for Festival and Event Committees)	
Product Validation		Management Skills for Tourism Sector	
Import/Export		Other (please state)	

3.3 Operation of the Panel

Assignments will be allocated to consultants as detailed in Section 2.4.

It will be a condition of appointment to the Panel that the successful Applicants provide evidence

- of:
- (i) Insurances
 - (ii) Tax Compliance
 - (iii) Declaration re statutory obligations

3.4 Number Admitted to the Panel

Only submissions that pass requirements at 3.9 will be admitted to the panel and there will be no restrictions on the panel numbers.

3.5 Estimated Value of the Panel

It is estimated that the overall spend under this Panel will be in the region of up to €210,000 ex VAT. It is emphasised, however, that this figure is provided strictly for indicative purposes only as there is no guaranteed expenditure under the Panel, which is subject to client needs and budgetary constraints.

3.6 Training Services Payment

Training can be scheduled during daytime/evening Monday to Friday.

Pricing should remain fixed for the duration of any contracts awarded under this Panel and for the lifetime of the Panel which will be in place until December 31st, 2028 (possibly extended to December 31st, 2029).

Applicants must indicate fully inclusive rate ex VAT for the following:

3.6.1 Onsite Training

- (a) Per Hour Rate
- (b) Half Day Training
- (c) Full Day Training

3.6.2 Offsite (Remote) Training

- (a) Per Hour Rate
- (b) Half Day Training
- (c) Full Day Training

All prices quoted must be exclusive of VAT. Value Added Tax where applicable, should be shown separately.

No payment will be made in relation to travel. All travel and subsistence in relation to this programme will be the responsibility of the persons or companies facilitating the training.

LEO Longford will cover costs associated with venue hire and refreshments.

This tender refers to the provision of a service to LEO Longford and will not lead to a contract of employment within LEO Longford. Successful members will engage with LEO Longford as contractors or through Limited Companies for the supply of services.

The Contracting Authority will not be responsible for any errors on the calculation of the costs provided in response to this Invitation to Tender. It is the responsibility of respondents to ensure that the costs quoted are correct and properly calculated. Proposals should remain valid for the duration of the Panel. The contract shall be a fixed price contract for its duration.

Please complete section A10 of the Tender Response Document indicating the quoted price for each Lot being tendered for.

A current Tax Clearance Cert must be furnished in order to effect payment.

3.7 Delivery Method

Delivery method required includes Online delivery (via Zoom, MS Teams or similar platforms) and face to face / traditional classroom.

3.8 Qualification Criteria

Only applicants meeting all the criteria set out below under section 3.9 will be admitted to the panel. In order to confirm Applicants' qualifications, Applicants are required to provide the information set out below and in the Tender Response Document

3.9 Requirements

Applicants are required to provide information on the following in the Tender Response Document (TRD). No other format will be accepted. The criteria and rules outlined below are assessed on a pass/fail basis. Failure to comply with the requirements will result in your application being considered inadmissible. Additional to the TRD, CVs of proposed service delivery personnel must be submitted with applications.

Only applicants passing all the Pass/Fail Criteria set out below will be admitted to the panel.

Applicants Details [PASS REQUIREMENT essential to be admitted to the panel]
Provide contact and general information on the applicants' organisation – entity name, address and contact details for individual responsible for this application and entity overview. Section A1 of TRD must be completed in full.
Previous Experience [PASS REQUIREMENT essential to be admitted to the panel]
A comprehensive <u>Tender Response Document</u> must be submitted <i>by all proposed service delivery personnel and demonstrate:</i> • They have the level and depth of experience to provide high quality services in relation to the requirements for ALL LOTS being tendered for. • Information clearly demonstrating 3 previous examples which show their capability to deliver the required training via blended learning, i.e., face to face, online or a combination of both. Examples should be within the last 2 years. If you can clearly demonstrate your experience across a number of different LOTS in one of the references provided, this will be acceptable. • Minimum of two years' experience working in/or with Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). • Relevant experience working in an area where professional or technical skills may have been developed that are transferable to micro enterprise. • Candidates must demonstrate strong communication, presentation, facilitation and evaluation skills.

- Candidates must be able to demonstrate an understanding of entrepreneurship and the challenges that SMEs face in today's economic climate.

Additional to the TRD, CVs of proposed service delivery personnel must be submitted with applications.

- Relevant third level qualifications or equivalent are desirable but not essential.

These details may be used for reference purposes and checks may be made without any further contact with applicants.

Financial and Economic Standing [PASS REQUIREMENT essential to be admitted to the panel]

Tax	Confirmation that the Applicant is fully tax compliant – please refer to the tax rules contained at A2 in the Tender Response Document.	
Turnover	Confirmation that the tendering party turnover exceeded €10,000 during one of the last three years or pro-rata if more recently established	
Insurance	Complete A4 of the Tender Response Document. The successful candidates shall be required to hold relevant insurance for the purpose of the work with LEO Longford with a minimum Professional Indemnity level of €300,000 required. Other insurances may include Public Liability, Employers Liability and other insurance as appropriate. Public Liability level of €6.5 million is only required if training meetings take place on the mentor's own premises. Employer's liability level of €13 million is only required where applicable.	
	Insurance Type	Require Value €
	Professional Indemnity	Min. €0.3 million

Computer Literacy

Applicants must confirm in the TRD that they have the following skills / requirements:

Applicants must be **computer literate** with good knowledge of Word, Excel, and commonly used email and digital communication platforms.

Applicants should have relevant software tools / licences to conduct online training if required i.e., Zoom, Microsoft Teams etc.

Declarations

Complete the declarations provided in the TRD as follows:

Declaration of Bona Fides as per Art. 57 of Directive 2014/24/EU as implemented by Regulation SI 284 of May 2016.

Compliance with relevant statutory obligations. Where Applicants are established and operating outside of the jurisdiction of supply, compliance with equivalent legislation as applicable in the country of establishment / operation is required.

Demonstrates operating of Data Protection Management systems and procedures in line with all relevant Data Protection legislation.
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Health & Safety

Applicants must confirm that they will comply with all relevant H&S legislation.
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NOTE: Applicants must be willing to provide evidence of all self-declared information within five (5) working days of request, which will be made prior to any award decision. If the evidence required is not provided by the deadline date, the Contracting Authority reserves the right to eliminate the Applicant from the competition. Furthermore, Applicants should note that the provision of inaccurate or misleading information in this declaration may lead to exclusion from participation in this and future Panels.

Applicants should also ensure in their applications 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.

3.10 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 applicants' qualifications, applicants are required to provide the information set out below in the Tender Response Document (TRD) which is based on a self-declaration model, however applicants are required to provide the minimum information required.

3.11 Relying on the Standing of Other Entities

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.

Applicants 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 applicants 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. INSTRUCTIONS FOR APPLICANTS

4.1 Submission of Applications

Tenderers must observe the following:

- Tenderers must complete the Tender Response Document provided and include

completed, signed and dated declaration in order to participate in this competition (**no other tender format will be accepted and may mean disqualification**).

- The tenderer is fully responsible for the safe and timely delivery of the tender.
- All supporting documentation requested including CVs of proposed service delivery personnel must be submitted with the application.

Applications submitted by any other means (including but not limited to by fax, post or hand delivery) will **not** be accepted.

The Contracting Authority is not responsible for corruption in electronic documents. Applicants must ensure electronic documents are not corrupt.

4.2 Queries

All queries regarding this tender should be through the Questions and Answers facility on www.etenders.gov.ie, including any omissions which would prevent applicants from submitting a comprehensive Application. Please submit queries as soon as possible.

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.

4.3 Cost of Preparation of an Application

The Contracting Authority will not be liable for any costs, charges or expenses incurred by Applicants in the preparation of an Application or any associated efforts. It is the responsibility of the Applicant to ensure that they are fully aware and understand the requirements as laid down in this document. Applicants 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.

4.4 Amendment of Tender Documentation

Applicants are prohibited from amending any text or content of forms or declarations or templates provided as part of this competition in their responses. Where amendments have been identified, the Contracting Authority may at its discretion eliminate the Applicant from further consideration.

4.5 Post Tender Clarification

At the discretion of the Contracting Authority, Applicants 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.

4.6 Right to Confirm Suitability

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

4.7 Formatting of Applications / Amending Application Documents

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

Applicants 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 applications being eliminated.

4.8 Collusive Tendering

If any Applicant 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 application, or for showing or forbearing to show any favour or disfavour to any person in relation to its Applications, the bid submitted by such Applicant shall be automatically disqualified and the circumstances surrounding such action shall be referred to the appropriate authority.

4.9 Confidentiality

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

Applicants 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 Applicant to influence the Contracting Authority or its staff in the process of examination, clarification, evaluation and comparison of Applications and in decisions concerning the award of a contract may result in the rejection of that Application.

4.10 Clarifications of Applications

The Contracting Authority is entitled, but not obliged, to seek clarification of Applications. No change in the price or substance of the Application shall be sought, offered or permitted. To assist in finalising the Application evaluation, selected Applicants may be invited to attend clarification meetings with the Contracting Authority.

4.11 Correction of Errors

Detailed pricing of all applications will be examined for errors that might alter the application pricing as determined from the figures on the tender form or as between the hard copy and electronic versions of the application (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 application form will be adjusted by the Contracting Authority in accordance with the above procedure and, with the agreement of the Applicant, shall be

considered as binding upon the Applicant. Without prejudice to the above, an Applicant not accepting the correction of their application as outlined may have their application 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 application submission, the amount in the application submission shall take precedence.

4.12 Change in the composition of an Applicant

Where a change in composition of an Applicant arises, this must be notified in writing to the Contracting Authority and formally approved by them.

The Contracting Authority reserves the right, but is not obliged, to disqualify any Applicant that makes any change to its composition after submission of an Application.

4.13 Interference and Inducement to Purchase

Any effort by the Applicant 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 Applications and in decisions concerning the Award of Contract shall have their Application rejected. The presumptions (including as to any gift, consideration or advantage) and other provisions under the Criminal Justice Act 2018 (Ireland), and all other measures for the time being governing the subject-matter in any applicable jurisdiction, shall be applicable.

4.14 Conflict of Interest

Any conflict of interest involving an Applicant (or group of applicants in the event of a consortium bid) must be fully disclosed to the Contracting Authority.

Any registrable interest involving the Applicant and the Contracting Authority or employees of the Contracting Authority, or their relatives must be fully disclosed in the submission/tender or should be communicated to the Contracting Authority immediately upon such information becoming known to the Applicant, 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. The terms 'registerable interest' and 'relative' shall be interpreted as per the Ethics in Public Office Act, 1995.

Failure to disclose a conflict of interest may disqualify an Applicant or invalidate an award of contract, depending on when the conflict of interest comes to light.

4.15 Publicity

Applicants 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 Panel 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 e-mail, 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 Panel.

4.16 Right Not to Award

The Contracting Authority reserves the right to accept or reject in whole or in part any or all Applications received, and to source the requirement with more than one Service Provider.

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.

4.17 Notifications of Tender Evaluations

All Applicants will be informed of the outcome of their Application following evaluation and any necessary clarifications. Potential outcomes can be:

- (a) Appointment to Panel
- (b) Award of Contract
- (c) Letter/Email of Regret
- (d) Decision not to proceed with the establishment of Contract or establishment of a Panel
- (e) Termination of the Panel

4.18 Policy on Personal Debriefings

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

4.19 Copyright

The Contracting Authority will have copyright ownership of any material developed for use by the Contracting Authority under the terms of any contract awards made under this Panel. 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 Applicant).

4.20 Brand Names, etc.

Please note in relation to any documentation associated with the establishment of this Panel; 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 for illustrative purposes only.

4.21 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. Applicants should make all reasonable efforts to minimise adverse environmental impact in the methods of services delivery and in materials used.

4.22 Currency and Payments

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

4.23 Irish Legislation and Law

Applicants should be aware that national legislation applies in other matters such as Employment, Working Hours, Official Secrets, Data Protection and Health and Safety. Applicants 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.

4.24 Anti-Competitive Conduct

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

4.25 Accessibility / Dignity at Work

Applicants 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 Applications 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.

4.26 Freedom of Information

In order to comply with legislation on the Freedom of Information the Contracting Authority operates a Code of Practice for Freedom of Information. The primary purpose of this code is to facilitate access by members of the public to information held by the body which is not routinely made available.

Anyone corresponding with the Contracting Authority through any procurement process should be aware that any information provided in the Application or other correspondence may be made available if requested under the Freedom of Information Code of Practice.

The Contracting Authority will consult with Applicants about sensitive information in their Application or correspondence before making a decision on the disclosure of any such information in response to a request under the relevant Freedom of Information legislation.

A decision on what information can be released under the relevant Freedom of Information legislation is the sole prerogative of the Contracting Authority.

Further Freedom of Information details can be found at Contracting Authority’s website - <http://www.Longfordcoco.ie>

4.27 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.

4.28 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. Further information on the Contracting Authority’s and LEO Longford’s Data Protection policies and requirements are available at <https://www.localenterprise.ie/Longford/Legal/GDPR/>

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 Applicant in response to this Request to Participate.

The Applicant, as Controller in respect of any Personal Data provided by it in its Application, is required to confirm by way of statement that all Data Subjects (where Data Subject has the meaning given under the Data Protection Laws) whose Personal Data is provided by the Applicant have consented to the processing of such Personal Data by the Applicant, the Contracting Authority, the Evaluation Team and the Supplier/Contractor/service Provider of the etenders.gov.ie website, for the purposes of the participation of the Applicant in this procurement process or that the Applicant otherwise has a legal basis for providing such Personal Data to the Contracting Authority for the purposes of its participation in this procurement process.

4.29 Changes in Legislation

As a condition of award, it shall be the sole responsibility of the applicant (in the event of success in this competition) to fulfil the obligations under the Contract, notwithstanding any changes in circulars, laws, regulations, taxation, duties, or other factors which might arise following the withdrawal of the United Kingdom from membership of the EU.