Appendix 1: Requirements and Specifications

Tenderers must address each of the issues and requirements in this part of the RFT and submit a detailed description in each case which demonstrates how these issues and requirements will be dealt with / met and their approach to the proposed delivery of the Services. A mere affirmative statement by the Tenderer that it can/will do so or a reiteration of the tender requirements is NOT sufficient in this regard.

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1. Introduction

The Contracting Authority (the "Organisation") is an Irish registered charity (RCN: 20005184) and seeks to appoint an independent external auditor to provide statutory audit services in accordance with applicable Irish law, accounting standards, and professional auditing requirements.

The Organisation operates on a decentralised basis, with c.70 branches around the country that operate local activities (such as providing an ambulance service operated by volunteers for local events, running local fundraising events, providing training to local commercial entities and members of the public, etc.). Branches generally operate their own bank accounts (with oversight from Head Office) and make financial returns to the Finance Department in Head Office on a monthly basis.

In addition, the organisation employs circa 150 FTEs, across the following departments:

- Finance
- Fundraising
- Compliance and Legal
- Communication
- National Services
- International and Migration
- Central Services

Both National Services and International and Migration departments employ staff who provide direct services to external beneficiaries in line with the organisation's charitable purpose. The organisation receives funds from both national, international and institutional grant making bodies, including the EU Commission and the Irish State in carrying out it's work.

The organisation reports its financial statements on a consolidated basis each year, as a single entity.

For examples of how the Audited Financial Statements have been presented in recent years, please see the organisation's Annual Reports which are available to the public from our website at this link.

It is anticipated that the appointment under this process shall be for a period of three years, subject to performance and annual renewal.

2. Overall Objective

The overall objective is to secure the services of an experienced and suitable statutory Auditor that will:

- Provide an independent opinion on the Organisation's financial statements;
- Enhance governance, transparency, and accountability;
- Assess and strengthen financial controls, systems, and risk management processes;
- Ensure compliance with applicable regulatory and reporting obligations.

3. Scope of Services

The appointed Auditor shall perform a comprehensive annual external audit and associated services, including but not limited to the following:

3.1 Creating an Audit Plan

The Auditor shall create an Audit Plan for approval by the Audit and Risk Committee which:

3.1.1 Sets out a clear timeline for delivery of the audit services each year, including for key milestones and deliverables and taking account of meetings with the Audit and Risk Committee, Board and General Assembly as required

3.1.2 Adopts a robust and risk-based audit approach, including:

- A combination of substantive testing and tests of controls, where appropriate;
- Use of data analytics techniques, where appropriate, including:
    - Large-scale batch testing;
    - Identification of anomalies, trends, and outliers;
- Evaluation of:
    - Materiality thresholds;
    - Audit risks (inherent, control, and detection);
- Documentation of audit methodology.

3.2 Performing Audit Services

The Auditor shall:

- Conduct an annual audit of the Organisation's financial statements;
- Perform audit procedures in accordance with all relevant standards, including:
    - International Standards on Auditing (Ireland) (ISA (Ireland));
    - Charities SORP (FRS 102) – applicable version (including 2026 iteration and future updates);
    - Charities Act 2009 (as amended);
    - Relevant guidance issued by the Charities Regulator;
    - Applicable tax and regulatory disclosure requirements;
- Confirm appropriateness of:
    - Accounting policies;

    - Estimates and judgments;
    - Consolidation treatments (if applicable).
- Assess the adequacy and effectiveness of:
    - Financial management systems;
    - Internal controls;
    - Governance arrangements relating to financial oversight;
- Determine compliance with:
    - Internal policies and procedures;
    - Delegated authorities;
    - Regulatory obligations;
- Review consistency of:
    - Trustees' Annual Report;
    - Financial statements disclosures;
- Identify deficiencies, control gaps, or weaknesses;
- Recommend:
    - Improvements to existing controls and systems;
    - New or revised policies where gaps are identified.
- Express an independent audit opinion on whether the financial statements:
    - Give a true and fair view of the Organisation's finances;
    - Have been properly prepared in accordance with the applicable financial reporting framework.

3.3 Deliverables

The Auditor shall provide the following deliverables:

3.3.1 Audit Plan

- Detailed audit strategy and timetable;
- Identification of key audit risks;
- Materiality levels;
- Planned audit procedures.

3.3.2 Audit Completion Report

- Summary of audit findings;
- Adjustments identified (corrected and uncorrected);
- Key risks and resolutions;
- Assessment of accounting policies and judgments.

3.3.3 Management Letter

- Detailed commentary on:
  - Internal control weaknesses;
  - Governance issues;
  - Operational inefficiencies;
- Clear prioritisation of recommendations;
- Practical and actionable improvement measures.

3.3.4 Audit Opinion

- Signed independent auditor’s report in accordance with relevant regulatory guidelines.

4. Engagement with Governance Bodies

4.1 Audit and Risk Committee

The Auditor shall:

- Attend **a minimum** of two meetings per audit cycle, including:
  - Pre-audit meeting to present audit plan and approach;
  - Post-audit meeting to present findings and management letter;
- Provide interim update reports as agreed;
- Engage proactively with the Committee Chair and members.

4.2 Presentations Following Audit Completion

In addition to engagement with the Audit and Risk Committee, the Auditor shall present audit outcomes and findings to:

- Audit and Risk Committee;
- Board of Directors/Trustees;

- General Assembly

Presentations shall include:

- Key audit insights;
- Control deficiencies and recommendations;
- Financial performance and risks;
- Emerging sector or regulatory risks.

5. Onsite and Fieldwork Requirements

The Auditor shall:

- Conduct onsite fieldwork where necessary;
- Coordinate with management to minimise disruption;
- Ensure secure and GDPR compliant handling of confidential and sensitive information;
- Maintain flexibility to perform remote audit procedures where appropriate.

The Organisation will provide space for the audit team in the Organisation's offices at 16 Merrion Square to facilitate fieldwork

6. Professional Standards and Capacity

The Auditor must:

- Be eligible for appointment under Irish law;
- Be registered with an approved supervisory body
- Have sufficient staffing and resource capacity to ensure delivery in the event of unexpected staff illness or leave
- Demonstrate:
    - Independence from the Organisation;
    - Absence of conflicts of interest.
- Operate a robust internal quality control system;
- Be subject to external quality assurance where applicable;
- Commit to continuous improvement and sector best practice.