



Health Service Executive (HSE)

RESTRICTED PROCEDURE

REQUEST TO PARTICIPATE

**Enterprise Integration Platform as a
Service**

Ref. No. HSE 28439

eTenders ID: 9034881

Publication Date	11th September 2026
Clarification Deadline	25th September 2026 at 12:00 GMT Please note the Contracting Authority reserves the right in its sole discretion to extend the Clarification Deadline by giving notice in writing on the eTenders portal
Submission Deadline	26th October 2026 at 12:00 GMT Please note the Contracting Authority reserves the right in its sole discretion to extend the Submission Deadline by giving notice in writing on the eTenders portal

Disclaimer

This Request to Participate (RTP) has been prepared for the purpose of providing information to interested parties (hereinafter referred to as Candidates) who wish to participate in this Procurement Process. This RTP (and the associated documents set out below) supersedes and replaces any and all previous documentation, communications and correspondence between the HSE and Candidates, and Candidates should place no reliance on such previous documentation and correspondence.

This RTP does not constitute, and shall not be interpreted as, an offer for sale, prospectus, or the basis of a contract. No contractual rights, expressed or implied, arise out of the procedures set out in this RTP.

No responsibility or liability for any loss or damage arising as a result of reliance on this RTP, or the information contained in this RTP or the Procurement Documents or for any omission is or will be accepted by the HSE or by any of its officers, employees, agents or professional advisors. No officer, employee, agent, or professional advisor of the HSE has any authority to give or make any representation or warranty, express or implied, in relation to such information. The HSE's officers, employees, agents and professional advisors expressly disclaim any and all liability arising out of the Procurement Documents, or information contained within them and any errors or omissions in or from the Procurement Documents and information.

The making of a Submission in response to the RTP does not guarantee that the Candidate will be invited to participate in subsequent stages of the Procurement Process. The HSE reserves the right to terminate or suspend the Procurement Process at any time without cost or liability to the HSE.

The HSE reserves the right to disqualify any Candidate who:

- (i) provides information or confirmations which later turn out to have been misleading, untrue or incorrect; and/or
- (ii) does not supply the information required by this RTP or the Procurement Documents or as directed otherwise by the HSE during the Procurement Process.

The making of a Submission in response to this RTP will be deemed to imply the Candidate's acceptance of its provisions without qualification.

Where it has been deemed necessary, terms and expressions used in this RTP have been defined in Appendix 1 – Glossary of Terms and shall have the meaning given to them in the Glossary of Terms save to the extent that the context or express provisions of this RTP otherwise require.

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Foreword

The HSE is seeking to procure an Enterprise Integration Platform as a Service (EiPaaS) to establish a secure, scalable, governed and reusable national interoperability capability. The platform must support the HSE's current heterogeneous integration landscape and provide a foundation for future digital health transformation.

This tender seeks to appoint a suitably qualified and experienced service provider capable of providing a product platform, associated vendor support and establishment of the core capability. This procurement is for the EiPaaS product capability, including software licensing or subscription, vendor support, and the establishment of the core platform capability. The HSE intends to retain control of the core platform, architecture, standards and governance.

A separate procurement for enablement, support, development or managed integration services may follow. That later procurement may provide additional capacity to configure, develop, test, deploy, support and operate integrations using the EiPaaS. The platform procured under this procurement process must therefore be capable of supporting a multi-supplier and HSE-controlled delivery model.

The HSE operates a complex application and data environment across acute hospitals, community services, primary care, national services, diagnostics, medicines, administrative systems and third-party providers. Existing integration arrangements include national, regional, local and programme-specific capabilities, using a range of messaging, API, file, event and bespoke integration patterns. These existing capabilities will not be replaced immediately. The successful EiPaaS must support coexistence, controlled onboarding, transition, reuse and enterprise governance.

The EiPaaS must support established healthcare interoperability patterns such as HL7 v2 messaging as well as modern API-led, FHIR-based and event-driven integration. It must provide routing, orchestration, transformation, standards support, monitoring, auditability, security controls, operational management and lifecycle governance. It must also support the practical realities of hybrid connectivity, including secure cloud-to-on-premise integration with systems located on HSE, third-party, National Health Network and other controlled network environments.

The EiPaaS is a foundational capability for national programmes including One Health Record / National Electronic Health Record, National Shared Care Record, ePrescribing, Community Care, diagnostic services, Healthlink, NIMIS, MedLIS and other future digital health initiatives. The platform must not be limited to a single programme. It must support a national, multi-programme and multi-supplier delivery model, with the HSE retaining control of the core platform, architecture, standards, governance and licensing.

The Procurement Documents have been prepared by the Contracting Authority for the purposes of providing information and an application procedure for Candidates interested in tendering for the Services and to assist Candidates in making their own evaluation of the potential opportunity to enter into a contractual relationship for the provision of the Services.

The onus is on Candidates to provide all of the information requested in this RTP in their Submissions. Candidates should inform themselves as to the Clarification

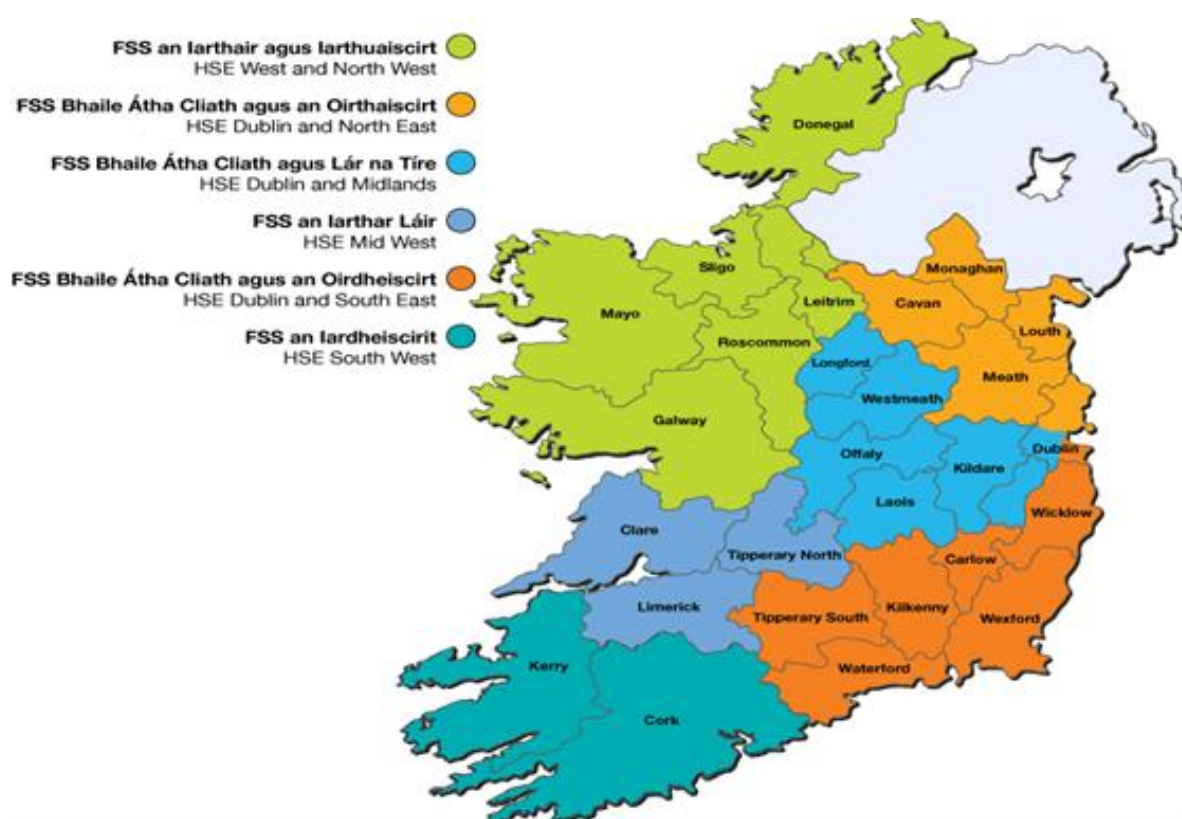
Deadline and the Submission Deadline. Each Candidate's Submission constitutes its agreement to, and acceptance of, the terms set forth herein.

Section A – Background Information

1. About the HSE

The Health Service Executive (HSE) was established in January 2005 as the single body responsible for meeting Ireland's statutory health and social care needs. The HSE is responsible for delivering clinical and support services nationwide, maintaining consistent standards and guidelines and ensuring adherence to regulatory requirements. The HSE provides thousands of services to young and old, in hospitals, health facilities and in communities across Acute and Community care settings both directly by the HSE and funded service providers including Sections 38 and 39 organisations. These services range from public health nurses treating older people in the community to caring for children with challenging behaviour; from educating people how to live healthier lives, to performing highly complex surgery; from planning for major emergencies, to controlling the spread of infectious diseases.

With over 160,000 employees, the HSE workforce comprises of Medical and Dental, Nursing and Midwifery, Health and Social Care Professions, Management and Administrative, General Support, Patient and Client Care. Everybody in Ireland will use one or more of the services provided by the staff of the HSE. They are of vital importance to the entire population.



As part of the Sláintecare reform programme, the HSE has restructured into six administrative operational Regions (as shown in the graphic on the previous page), integrating hospital and community services to support the delivery of coordinated, person-centred care. Solutions tendered for must demonstrate the flexibility and scalability required to operate effectively across these Regions and to support ongoing organisational and service evolution.

2. Background and Context for the Procurement

2.1. Project Background

This section provides candidates with the business, technical and operational context for the Enterprise Integration Platform as a Service (EiPaaS) procurement. It is intended to help candidates understand the national integration and interoperability domain that the proposed EiPaaS must support, both at initial implementation and over the expected lifetime of the platform.

The HSE is not procuring a narrow integration tool for a single programme or a single set of interfaces. The HSE is seeking a secure, scalable, governed and standards-based enterprise integration platform capability that can support the current national landscape and provide a foundation for future interoperability across health and social care services over the next 15 years and beyond.

The HSE operates a complex and heterogeneous application landscape. Current integration arrangements have developed over time across national programmes, regions, hospitals, community services and individual system implementations. Some integrations are mature and business-critical; others are programme-specific, local, point-to-point, bespoke or dependent on older technologies.

This has created a landscape where valuable integrations exist, but reuse, monitoring, resilience, governance, lifecycle control and standardisation vary across the estate. The HSE therefore requires an enterprise integration platform capability that can provide consistent technical foundations while supporting coexistence with existing messaging systems and services.

The EiPaaS is expected to support both current integration needs and future transformation. It must be capable of handling established healthcare messaging patterns while also supporting modern API-led, FHIR-based and event-driven interoperability patterns. The platform must be sufficiently flexible to support legacy systems, current national services and emerging digital health platforms without requiring the HSE to replace the core integration platform as the landscape evolves.

2.2. Current Landscape and Sources of Integration Demand

The HSE is not starting from a greenfield position. Existing integration services and programme-specific solutions are already in place and will continue to operate for some time. Some services are national in reach, some are local or regional, and some are embedded in existing system contracts.

The implemented EiPaaS must coexist with existing integration assets and must support their transition over time. The HSE does not expect all existing interfaces to be migrated immediately. The successful platform must support a controlled and pragmatic migration and onboarding approach, including:

- coexistence with existing integration engines, APIs, message brokers, gateways and programme-specific integration services;
- progressive onboarding of new use cases; selective transition of existing interfaces where justified;
- clear separation of responsibilities between the EiPaaS platform, existing programme solutions, source systems, target systems and future enabling service providers;
- governance over standards, naming, routing, environments, deployment, monitoring, audit, change and release management.

The successful platform must support reuse, transparency, operational control and enterprise governance and help the HSE avoid creating isolated integration capabilities.

The HSE integration domain includes clinical, administrative, diagnostic, operational and national digital health systems. The following categories illustrate the breadth of the domain candidates should consider. This is not an exhaustive inventory.

a. Acute Hospital and Regional Systems

The HSE operates multiple acute hospital systems and regional application landscapes, including patient administration systems, electronic patient record systems, emergency department systems, scheduling, discharge, ordering, reporting, departmental and specialist clinical systems. Integration requirements may include admission, discharge and transfer events, patient demographics, referrals, results, appointments, clinical documents, orders, status updates, notifications and operational messages.

b. Primary Care, GP, Pharmacy and Community Systems

The national interoperability domain includes systems and providers outside acute hospitals, including GP practice systems, pharmacy systems, community care systems, mental health, disability, older persons, public health and social care systems. Integration must support information sharing across care boundaries, including use cases where data originates outside HSE-hosted infrastructure or is exchanged with third-party provider systems.

c. National Services and Shared Platforms

The EiPaaS domain includes national systems and services such as Healthlink, the National Shared Care Record, the National Integrated Medical Imaging System, the HSE Laboratory Information System (MedLIS), health identifiers services, ePrescribing and national medicines-related services, and future national electronic health record capabilities. These services may act as data sources, data consumers, integration intermediaries or reference services depending on the use case.

d. Diagnostic, Laboratory, Imaging and Medicines Systems

Laboratory, imaging, pharmacy, prescribing, dispensing and medicines-related services are central to the future interoperability landscape. Candidates should expect the EiPaaS to support diagnostic orders, results, reports, images metadata, medicines information, ePrescribing-related flows, reconciliation data and other structured clinical information, subject to the detailed requirements and the scope of each future use case.

e. Administrative, Financial and Operational Systems

Although the primary emphasis of EiPaaS is health integration and interoperability, the broader HSE enterprise landscape also includes administrative, financial, workforce, procurement and operational systems. Candidates should not assume that future integration demand will be limited to direct clinical messaging only. The platform should be capable of supporting controlled enterprise integration patterns where approved by HSE governance.

f. External Parties and Connected Organisations

The future integration domain may include public, voluntary, private and partner organisations involved in care delivery, diagnostics, national services, shared care pathways, procurement or system support. Candidates must describe how their product supports secure, auditable, standards-based exchange across organisational boundaries and how it handles identity, authentication, authorisation, consent-related controls, audit and operational governance where applicable.

g. Education, Research and Training Partners

The proposed EiPaaS solution should have the capability for safe, selective and regulated data exchange and information sharing with the teaching /academic, training and regulatory agencies with which the HSE interacts on a regular basis, such as Medical Schools, Universities, Royal Colleges and Medical Council. Candidates should uphold the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) principles during such interface exchanges.

2.3. Strategic Alignment

Ireland's health service is undergoing major digital transformation. The EiPaaS procurement is aligned with the direction set by Sláintecare and Digital for Care and the wider national move towards connected, data-driven and digitally enabled care.

Sláintecare sets the strategic direction for a universal health service that can provide the right care, in the right place, at the right time. Achieving that model requires information to move safely and consistently across care settings, organisations, systems and geographies. Digital for Care sets out the national digital health direction to 2030 and identifies the need for digital records, connected care, better use of health information and improved digital access for patients and staff.

The EiPaaS must also support readiness for the evolving Irish and European health data environment, including the Health Information Act, European Health Data Space requirements, national standards development, structured health data exchange, and

greater use of standards such as HL7 v2, FHIR, APIs, event-based integration and recognised clinical terminology and coding standards.

2.4. Objectives of the Procurement

The HSE is entering into this procurement having identified six key objectives:

Objective 1: Delivery of a unified, secure and scalable enterprise integration platform

- Provide the HSE with the capability to support interoperability across Ireland's health and social care ecosystem.

Objective 2: Establish enterprise interoperability capability

- Put in place a national platform capability for secure integration, message routing, transformation and API management across HSE services.

Objective 3: Support national Digital Health programmes

- Provide the foundational interoperability capability required for national digital health initiatives.

Objective 4: Improve governance and security

- Standardise integration controls, monitoring, auditability and security across all future interoperability services.

Objective 5: Reduce fragmentation and complexity

- Replace fragmented programme-specific approaches with a reusable and centrally governed enterprise platform capability

Objective 6: Enable scalable future delivery

- Provide a platform on which future interfaces, services and use cases can be delivered more rapidly and consistently under separate implementation arrangements.

2.5. Scope of the Procurement

The HSE seeks to procure a national Enterprise Integration Platform as a Service to enable the establishment of a centrally governed enterprise interoperability platform capability within a HSE-approved environment, introducing standardised controls for future integration design, deployment, monitoring and support. The platform capability is intended for enterprise use across all HSE regions and national services, supporting future interoperability requirements across acute, community and other care settings as relevant.

The core functionality of the platform will include message routing, transformation, orchestration, API management, standards-based exchange, monitoring, auditability and operational control. The platform is required to support healthcare interoperability

patterns and standards relevant to future HSE use cases, while enabling consistent governance, security and reuse across programmes and services.

The successful Candidate will provide a solution which allows for a core platform configuration required for secure operation, access control, monitoring, audit and environment management. It will also process validation of required interoperability, transformation, API and operational capabilities.

The proposed EiPaaS solution will provide enterprise integration capabilities required to support future interoperability use cases across HSE and connected health services.

The technical requirements for the implemented EiPaaS include but are not limited to:

- **Infrastructure:** Cloud-compatible, scalable and resilient in line with HSE ICT standards, including high availability and disaster recovery options where required.
- **Standards & Compliance:** Support recognised interoperability standards and profiles relevant to healthcare integration, including HL7 v2, FHIR and API-based exchange, and align with HSE architecture, security, data protection and regulatory requirements.
- **Integration Capability:** Support message/event streams, routing, transformation, orchestration and secure exchange with existing and future HSE systems, including national services where required.
- **API Capability:** Support development, exposure and management of enterprise APIs with appropriate access control, monitoring and lifecycle management.
- **Security & Audit:** Provide encryption, authentication, role-based access control, audit logging and operational monitoring consistent with HSE security expectations.
- **Operations:** Support automation, deployment control, monitoring and maintainability sufficient for enterprise operation.
- **Extensibility:** Support future configuration and extension for additional use cases without requiring replacement of the core platform including leveraging AI.
- **Proof of Concept Implementation:** Creation of a small-scale implementation of a Proof of Concept to ensure functionality.

In order to assist Candidates in their responses to this document, a more detailed set of requirements have been set out in Appendix 2. Full detailed requirements will be provided to shortlisted candidates as part of the Request for Tender phase of this procurement.

3. Procurement Process Overview

- 3.1. The Contracting Authority is seeking to appoint an Economic Operator to design, build, test and implement and provide ongoing support for a national Enterprise Integration Platform as a Service, hereafter referred to as EiPaaS.
- 3.2. The Contracting Authority hereby invites Submissions from Candidates interested in being shortlisted for the Tender Stage of the Procurement Process.
- 3.3. The Services that the Contracting Authority requires are described in more detail in Appendix 2 – Detailed Scope of Services. The service requirements outlined in Appendix 2 are not definitive and may be superseded by further documents provided later in the Procurement Process. They are included to provide Candidates with a high-level overview and understanding of the likely service requirements and will inform how the HSE will determine whether a Project Reference is similar in size, scale, scope and complexity.
- 3.4. The HSE is acting as the Contracting Authority on behalf of the Irish publicly funded health sector.
- 3.5. The Procurement Process will follow the Restricted Procedure.
- 3.6. The Contracting Authority intends to award one Contract to a single Tenderer.
- 3.7. The Contract to be awarded will be for an initial duration of five (5) years with extension in whole or in parts for an additional ten (10) years, for a total term of contract of fifteen (15) years.
- 3.8. Provided that there are a sufficient number of suitable Candidates, the Contracting Authority anticipates that the five (5) highest ranked Candidates will be shortlisted and invited to participate in the Tender Stage.
- 3.9. The Contracting Authority reserves the right to issue the RFT to the next highest ranked Candidate should a shortlisted Candidate either withdraw or be expelled (for example, for a breach of the provisions of this RTP or a breach of the provisions of the RTP once the Tender Stage has commenced) from the Procurement Process before the commencement of or during the Tender Stage. In this instance the indicative timetable for the Procurement Process may change.
- 3.10. The Contracting Authority will notify successful and unsuccessful Tenderers of the outcome of the Procurement Process and will observe a standstill period in accordance with the Procurement Regulations prior to entering into any contract with the successful Tenderer.
- 3.11. The Contracting Authority reserves the right to enter into limited negotiations with the successful Tenderer and to carry out final due diligence.
- 3.12. The Contracting Authority reserves the right to vary or amend elements of the Procurement Process as described herein.

4. Timeline

4.1. Please note that all dates are indicative only and the Contracting Authority reserves the right to amend the timelines below at its absolute discretion. Where there are changes to the Clarification Deadline or the Submission Deadline, these will be notified via the eTenders portal.

Description	Dates
Dispatch of RTP to www.eTenders.gov.ie and OJEU	11 th September 2026
Clarification Deadline	25 th September 2026 at 12:00 GMT
Submission Deadline	26 th October 2026 at 12:00 GMT

5. Documents for this Procurement

5.1. The following documents (together termed the “Procurement Documents”) are issued as part of the first stage of the Procurement Process:

5.1.1. This RTP;

5.1.2. The Response Document;

5.1.3. The ESPD template;

5.1.4. The HSE Cyber Security Baseline Requirements Checklist

5.1.5. Any updated versions of the above documents and any other information provided by the Contracting Authority to Candidates in relation to this Procurement Process; and

5.2. Candidates should note that the Contracting Authority reserves the right, at its absolute discretion, to vary, amend, update and/or issue new versions of the Procurement Documents and to extend the Submission Deadline where necessary.

6. External Advisors

The Contracting Authority is supported on this procurement by certain external advisors as set out in the following table. Additionally, the Contracting Authority unilaterally reserves the right to engage external legal advisors should they deem necessary.

Advisor	Role
Deloitte Ireland LLP	Advisor on Enterprise Integration Platform as a Service procurement, including requirements
State Claims Agency	Advisor on insurance requirements
Gartner	Advisor on Enterprise Integration Platform as a Service requirement

Section B – Rules governing the Shortlisting Stage

Please note that the rules below only apply to the Shortlisting Stage; the rules applicable to subsequent stages of the Procurement Process will be advised at each stage.

1. Introduction

- 1.1. Candidates are advised to follow the instructions in this RTP (and Response Document) prior to making their Submission. Failure to comply with the requirements of the RTP may, at the discretion of the Contracting Authority, result in the disqualification of the Candidate.
- 1.2. While every effort has been made to provide accurate background information and a summary of requirements and specifications, Candidates must form their own conclusions about the information needed to meet the requirements set out in the RTP.
- 1.3. No reliance will be placed on any information or statements contained in the Procurement Documents, and no representation or warranty, expressed or implied, is or will be made in relation to such information. The information provided does not purport to be comprehensive or to have been independently verified.
- 1.4. Nothing in the RTP will be construed as legal, financial, technical or tax advice. Without prejudice to the foregoing, neither the Contracting Authority nor its professional advisors will have any liability or responsibility in relation to the accuracy, adequacy or completeness of any information or statements made in the RTP or for the reasonableness of any assumption made therein.
- 1.5. The Contracting Authority and its professional advisors will not incur any liability or responsibility arising out of the Procurement Process.
- 1.6. Candidates will inform themselves of and will observe any applicable legal requirements. Candidates will be deemed to have examined all of the Procurement Documents and by their own independent observations and enquiries will be held to have fully informed themselves as to the nature and extent of the requirements of this RTP.
- 1.7. The Contracting Authority shall be entitled to retain a copy of all Submissions received and shall otherwise be entitled to dispose of copies of Submissions in accordance with law.

1.8. By its participation in this Procurement Process each Candidate (and where applicable, each Consortium Member) warrants, represents and undertakes to the Contracting Authority that all information, representations, and other matters of fact communicated or to be communicated to the Contracting Authority by the Candidate (and where applicable any Consortium Member), in connection with or arising out of any Submission are true, complete and accurate as at the date communicated. Should it later transpire that the Candidate (or where relevant any Consortium Member) is guilty of misrepresentation with respect to any information, representations and any other matters of fact communicated to the Contracting Authority in connection with or arising out of any Submission, the Contracting Authority will, at its absolute discretion, decide on the appropriate course of action, which may in appropriate circumstances include eliminating the Candidate from further participation in the Procurement Process or terminating the Contract entered into with the successful Tenderer.

2. Information on eTenders

2.1. All information relating to the Shortlisting Stage, including the Procurement Documents, clarifications, and changes, will be published on the eTenders website (www.eTenders.gov.ie). Registration is free of charge and there is no charge for downloading documents.

2.2. The Contracting Authority will not accept responsibility for information relayed (or not relayed) via third parties.

2.3. Where Candidates consider that documents are missing which would prevent them providing a Submission, they shall as soon as reasonably practically raise a query with the Contracting Authority via the eTenders portal in line with paragraph 9 (Communications) of this Section B.

2.4. Candidates are required to immediately inform the Contracting Authority of any ambiguity, discrepancy, or error in the Procurement Documents via the eTenders portal in line with paragraph 9 (Communications) of this Section B.

2.5. The Contracting Authority reserves the right to exclude from the Procurement Process any Candidate who fails to comply with the requirements of this paragraph.

3. Submissions by Consortia

3.1. The Contracting Authority recognises that separate entities may wish to collaborate to form a Consortium which will then make a Submission as a Candidate.

3.2. Consortia are not required by the Contracting Authority to assume a specific legal form in order to make a Submission. However, in the event that a Consortium is successful in the Procurement Process, the Contracting Authority may require the successful Consortium to assume a specific legal form prior to entry into the Contract, to the extent that this is necessary for the satisfactory performance of the Contract.

- 3.3. Should the Contract be awarded to a Consortium, the Contracting Authority shall require each Consortium Member to be jointly and severally liable to the Contracting Authority for the fulfilment of the terms of the Contract.
- 3.4. Candidates should clearly state in the appropriate section(s) of the ESPD whether the Candidate is a Consortium. Candidates should refer to Part 1 of Response Document and Section D – Guidance for Completion of this RTP for guidance on completion of the Submission.
- 3.5. Where the Candidate is a Consortium, the Contracting Authority will deal with all matters relating to this Procurement Process through a single nominated entity authorised to represent all members of the Consortium (the “Lead Consortium Member”). The Lead Consortium Member will be responsible for the overall coordination of the Consortium and shall be the entity to whom all communications shall be directed and from whom communications will be accepted during the Procurement Process. Correspondence from any other person will NOT be accepted, acknowledged, or responded to.

4. Change in Candidates or Consortium Members

- 4.1. Any change in the structure of a Candidate (including any changes to the membership of a Consortium or to Other Entities, ownership of a Consortium Member or significant changes to numbers of personnel referred to in the Submission) after the Candidate has made its Submission must be immediately notified to the Contracting Authority in writing and may result in disqualification from the Procurement Process unless approved in writing by the Contracting Authority. The Contracting Authority reserves the right, at its absolute discretion, to withhold such approval for any such changes and to disqualify the Candidate concerned from any further participation in the Procurement Process, or alternatively, it may require the Candidate to make a new Submission and revise its assessment of the Candidate's Submission on the basis of the information then available to the Contracting Authority.
- 4.2. Once a Candidate's Submission has been accepted by the Contracting Authority there can be no change to their Submission without the express written permission of the Contracting Authority. Further information will be shared with Tenderers during the Tender Stage on how the Contracting Authority will respond to changes in the structure of a Candidate (including any changes to the membership of a Consortium or to Other Entities).

5. Multiple Participation

- 5.1. Where an entity is the Core Vendor of the proposed solution, that entity shall be limited to submitting one Submission only (either in its own capacity or as part of a Consortium). Other entities (i.e. fulfilling roles other than the Core Vendor of the proposed solution) may participate in more than one Submission. However, in such circumstances, the potential multiple participation and/or potential conflict of interest must be notified to the Contracting Authority for review and approval as soon as the conflict or potential conflict becomes apparent and in any event in advance of the Submission Deadline. Such notice must also include a statement confirming that each relevant Consortium or Candidate is aware of the multiple participation of the particular member. The Contracting Authority, at its sole discretion, reserves the right to require an entity participating in more than one Consortium to take such steps as are necessary to ensure effective competition or security of supply or to mitigate the risk of a conflict of interest which may extend to a requirement that the entity withdraw from multiple Submissions. This section should be read in conjunction with Section B paragraph 11 (Conflicts of Interest)

6. Reliance on Other Entities

- 6.1. In order to demonstrate a Candidate's economic and financial standing and/or technical and professional ability, a Candidate may rely on the capacities of Other Entities (for example, parent/group companies or unrelated entities). In such cases the Candidate must prove to the satisfaction of the Contracting Authority that it will have the necessary resources at its disposal when required, for example, by producing an undertaking from the Other Entities to that effect. The Candidate is required to submit a letter of undertaking, from the Other Entity to this effect, as part of its Submission. A contractual commitment in the form of a guarantee or in such other form as the Contracting Authority may specify may be required at contract stage in favour of the Contracting Authority from any such Other Entity.
- 6.2. Candidates should clearly state in Part IIC of the ESPD whether the Candidate is relying on the capacities of Other Entities in order to meet the selection criteria. Candidates should refer to Part 1 of the Response Document and Section D – Guidance for Completion of this RTP for guidance on completion of the Submission.

7. Right to Reject and/or Disqualify

- 7.1. The Contracting Authority reserves the right to reject or disqualify a Candidate where:
- 7.1.1. The Candidate's Response Document is incomplete or fails to meet the Contracting Authority's submission requirements.

- 7.1.2. The Candidate (or where relevant, Other Entities or any Consortium Member where the Candidate is a Consortium) fails to provide evidence upon request which is considered by the Contracting Authority as sufficient to demonstrate the absence of any exclusion grounds under Regulation 57 (Exclusion Grounds) of the Procurement Regulations or fails to demonstrate reliability despite the existence of a relevant (or relevant) exclusion ground(s) in accordance with Regulation 57(6) and (7) of the Procurement Regulations at any stage during the Shortlisting Stage or the Procurement Process;
- 7.1.3. The Candidate (or where the Candidate is a Consortium, any Consortium Member) is guilty of serious misrepresentation in relation to its Submission and/or its conduct in the Procurement Process; or
- 7.1.4. In accordance with Paragraph 4.1, there is a change in the ownership, structure, identity, control, financial standing of the Candidate or any Consortium Member or where there is a change in the roles of any Candidate and/or Consortium Members (including the identity of the Lead Consortium Member).
- 7.2. Please note that Candidates selected to participate in the Tender Stage are required to immediately notify the Contracting Authority of any changes (or foreseeable potential changes) to the information provided in their Submissions (including but not limited to the grounds for exclusion detailed in Section C – Evaluation of Submissions of this RTP).
- 7.3. Where Candidates have self-certified that they meet the selection criteria in Part 2 & Part 3 of the Response Document, the Contracting Authority will verify this information prior to commencement of the Tender Stage. If a Candidate fails to provide evidence which is considered by the Contracting Authority as sufficient to demonstrate:
- (i) its fulfilment of all of the selection criteria in this RTP;
 - (ii) the absence of exclusion grounds under Regulation 57 of the Procurement Regulations; or
 - (iii) the reliability of the Candidate despite the existence of a relevant exclusion ground or grounds in accordance with Regulation 57(6) and (7) of the Procurement Regulations;
- it may be excluded from the Procurement Process. Furthermore, if a Candidate fails to supply the evidence sought within the timeframe set by the Contracting Authority for response, it may be excluded from the Procurement Process.
- 7.4. If a Candidate does not, upon request by the Contracting Authority, provide evidence which is considered by the Contracting Authority as sufficient to demonstrate:

- (i) the fulfilment by any Other Entity on whose capacity the Candidate relies for the purpose of fulfilling the selection criteria (or any one of them) in accordance with this RTP; and
- (ii) the absence of exclusion grounds in respect of any Other Entity, or the reliability of any Other Entity despite the existence of a relevant exclusion ground, it shall be excluded from further participation in this Procurement Process unless it replaces the Other Entity with one which the Contracting Authority is satisfied meets all relevant requirements of this RTP.

7.5. The Contracting Authority reserves the right to take appropriate measures to require the replacement of a Consortium Member, Other Entity or Subcontractor where there are grounds to exclude that organisation under the Procurement Regulations.

8. Returning the Submission

8.1. Submissions must be submitted via the electronic post box available on www.etenders.gov.ie. The eTenders post box is time locked.

8.2. Candidates must ensure that they give themselves sufficient time to upload and submit all required documentation before the Submission Deadline (as set out in paragraph 4.1 of Section A). Candidates should take into account the fact that upload speeds vary. Candidates should note the maximum limit indicated on the eTenders website for the total (combined) documents sent to the electronic post-box.

8.2. All documents being uploaded as part of the Submission must be clearly titled and uploaded as a single zipped folder.

8.3. In order to submit the Submission to the electronic post-box, please note that you must click "Submit Response". After submitting you can still modify and re-send your response up until the Submission Deadline. Candidates should be aware that the 'Submit Response' button will be disabled automatically upon the expiration of the Submission Deadline.

8.4. Avoid last-minute problems by familiarising yourself with eTenders well in advance of the Submission Deadline.

8.5. Late Submissions may exceptionally be accepted by the Contracting Authority where it, at its absolute discretion, considers that the principle of proportionality may require acceptance, such as where for example the lateness results from the fault of the Contracting Authority or the eTenders platform.

9. Communications

9.1. All communication between a Candidate and the Contracting Authority must be in writing, via the messaging facility on eTenders.

9.2. All requests for clarification must be directed to the messaging facility on www.etenders.gov.ie and submitted no later than the Clarification Deadline set out in paragraph 4.1 of Section A.

- 9.3. The Contracting Authority intends to provide responses to requests for clarification raised by Candidates to all Candidates, without identifying the source of any requests for clarification. It is the responsibility of all Candidates to check the messaging facility on eTenders on a daily basis.
- 9.4. Clarifications may be answered in batches rather than one at a time. The Contracting Authority will endeavour to answer all clarifications as quickly as possible, however, it does not guarantee a minimum response time.
- 9.5. If a Candidate believes that a clarification request is confidential or commercially sensitive it must **mark the clarification request as “confidential” or “commercially sensitive” in the eTenders’ message subject field** and Candidates must, if requested, provide the Contracting Authority with the reasons why they consider the information commercially sensitive or confidential. If the Contracting Authority, in its absolute discretion, is satisfied that the clarification request should be properly regarded as confidential or commercially sensitive, the clarification request and the Contracting Authority’s response to that clarification request will be kept confidential (subject to the requirements of any law, including Freedom of Information Legislation).
- 9.6. If the Contracting Authority determines that it would be inappropriate to answer the request for clarification on a confidential basis it will notify the Candidate and require the Candidate to either withdraw the clarification request or to resubmit without the requirement for confidentiality.
- 9.7. If requests for clarification are grouped in a single message, then **any clarification request marked as “confidential” or “commercially sensitive” must not be grouped with any other requests for clarification.**
- 9.8. Failure to comply with any of the above procedures may result in the disqualification of a Candidate by the Contracting Authority.
- 9.9. Please note that responses to requests for clarification issued by the Contracting Authority will become part of the Procurement Documents.

10. Conditions of Contract

- 10.1. A draft contract for the Services will be provided to shortlisted Candidates as part of the RFT.

11. Conflicts of Interest

- 11.1. Candidates must complete the Conflict of Interest Declaration in Part 4 of the Response Document, declaring any actual or potential conflict of interest involving a Candidate, including conflicts associated with any current or previous work undertaken, or any relationship that may reasonably be perceived to potentially conflict or impact on their ability to participate in the Procurement Process or fulfil the requirements of the Contract. The Candidates must also include within the Conflict of Interest Declaration in Part 4 any mitigations that the Candidate has or will put in place.
- 11.2. In the event that the Contracting Authority considers that a conflict of interest or potential conflict of interest exists, the Contracting Authority will (in its absolute discretion) decide on the appropriate course of action.
- 11.3. Failure to disclose a material conflict of interest may disqualify a Candidate or cause the termination of any subsequent contract and entitle the Contracting Authority to seek remedies, such as cost or compensation for loss.
- 11.4. Candidates must disclose any registrable interest involving the Candidate and the Contracting Authority or their relatives or must be communicated to the Contracting Authority immediately upon such information becoming known to the Candidate, in the event of this information only coming to the Candidate's notice after the Submission Deadline and prior to the award of any Contract. The terms 'registrable interest' and 'relative' shall have the meaning prescribed by the Ethics in Public Office Act 1995.

12. Clarification of Submissions

- 12.1. To assist in the assessment of Submissions, the Contracting Authority may request a Candidate to clarify its Submission including, without limitation, correcting an ambiguity or obvious error which is likely to have a simple explanation and can be easily resolved.
- 12.2. Candidates should note that the Contracting Authority is not obliged to request a Candidate to clarify any aspect of its Submission, however the Contracting Authority may do so at its discretion where the Contracting Authority considers that clarification is recommended and/or permitted in accordance with relevant guidance and applicable procurement law.
- 12.3. Responses to requests for clarification must not materially change any of the elements of the Submission.

13. Anti-Competitive Conduct

13.1. The Candidate's particular attention is drawn to the application of the Competition Acts 2002 to 2022. The Acts declare it a criminal offence for Candidates to collude on prices or terms in a public procurement procedure. If a Candidate, in connection with this Procurement Process, either:

- (i) fixes or adjusts the manner or context of its Submission by or in accordance with any agreement or arrangement with any other Candidate;
- (ii) enters into any agreement or arrangement with any other Candidate that it shall refrain from participating in the Procurement Process or any part of it;
- (iii) causes or induces any person to enter such agreement as is mentioned in this paragraph;
- (iv) offers or agrees to pay or give or does pay or give any sum of money, inducement or valuable consideration directly or indirectly to any person for doing or having done or causing or having caused to be done any act or omission which is likely to affect the Procurement Process or any other Prequalification Submission or proposed Prequalification Submission; or
- (v) communicates to any person other than the Contracting Authority the contents of its Submission (except where such disclosure is permitted by this RTP) or carries on any other form of co-operation or collusion which the Contracting Authority considers has actually or potentially undermined the Tender Process,

the Candidate may be disqualified from the Procurement Process without prejudice to any other civil remedies available to the Contracting Authority and without prejudice to any criminal liability which such conduct may attract.

13.2. Should the Contracting Authority become aware of direct or indirect communications through trade associations or otherwise between Candidates relating to the Contract or which might facilitate price collusion the Contracting Authority reserves the right to notify the Competition and Consumer Protection Commission and/or to suspend such Candidates.

13.3. If the matter is not satisfactorily resolved by the time evaluation of all other Submissions is complete, the Contracting Authority reserves its right to base its decision on all Submissions received but not suspended.

13.4. If any Candidate (or a person associated with a Candidate), in connection with this Procurement Process, either:

- (i) canvasses or offers any inducement, fee or reward to any employee, servant or agent of the Contracting Authority or its professional advisors;
- (ii) does anything which would constitute a breach of the Criminal Justice (Corruption Offences) Act 2018 or the Regulation of Lobbying Act 2015; or
- (iii) approaches any employee, servant or agent of the Contracting Authority or its professional advisors except as authorised in this RTP, including for the purposes of soliciting the employment of any such persons or soliciting information about the Procurement Process,

that Candidate may be eliminated from the Procurement Process, without prejudice to any other civil remedies available to the Contracting Authority and without prejudice to any criminal liability which such conduct may attract.

14. Ethics

- 14.1. Candidates should note that canvassing or failure to comply with the communications requirements set out in this Section B – Rules governing the Shortlisting Stage may result in the disqualification of a Candidate.
- 14.2. Any Candidate who attempts to improperly influence any staff or agents of the Contracting Authority in the process of examination, clarification, or evaluation of Submissions or in decisions concerning the award of the Contract shall have its Submission rejected.
- 14.3. Failure to comply with this paragraph 14 may result in the exclusion of the Candidate from the Procurement Process and other procurement competitions conducted by the Contracting Authority and in penalties.

15. Amendments

- 15.1. If it is necessary for the Contracting Authority to amend the Procurement Documents in any way prior to receipt of Submissions, all Candidates will be notified simultaneously through the eTenders portal.
- 15.2. If deemed appropriate by the Contracting Authority, and in accordance with the Procurement Regulations, the Clarification Deadline and/or the Submission Deadline may be extended.

16. Right to Clarify, Cancel or Vary the Procurement Process

- 16.1. The Contracting Authority reserves the right, in its sole and absolute discretion, to take any such steps as it considers necessary, desirable or appropriate to maintain healthy competition throughout the Procurement Process, including:
 - 16.1.1. to change the basis of, or procedures (including the timetable) relating to the Procurement Process;
 - 16.1.2. to amend or withdraw the Procurement Documents, its requirements and any information contained herein at any time by notice, in writing, to Candidates;
 - 16.1.3. to waive any requirements of this RTP or the Response Document (to the extent permitted by law);
 - 16.1.4. to reject any or all Submissions;
 - 16.1.5. to disqualify any Candidate who does not make a compliant Submission in accordance with the instructions in this RTP;

- 16.1.6. to require a Candidate to clarify or amplify its Submission in writing and/or provide additional or updated information at any time during the Procurement Process (failure to respond adequately may result in the Candidate not being selected or being disqualified from the Procurement Process);
 - 16.1.7. not to invite a Candidate to proceed to any subsequent stage of the Procurement Process;
 - 16.1.8. not to furnish a Candidate with additional information in respect of any aspect of its requirements or otherwise;
 - 16.1.9. not to otherwise negotiate with a Candidate in respect of the award of the Contract;
 - 16.1.10. to cancel the Procurement Process, or any part thereof, at any time; and
 - 16.1.11. to extend the Clarification Deadline and/or Submission Deadline.
- 16.2. In the event of cancellation of the Procurement Process, or any part thereof, Candidates will be notified by the Contracting Authority.
- 16.3. In no event shall the Contracting Authority be liable for any costs or damages howsoever arising, including, without limitation, damages for loss of profits, which are in any way connected with the cancellation of the Procurement Process, or any part thereof.
- 16.4. The publication of a contract notice does not commit the Contracting Authority to proceeding with the Procurement Process or the award of the Contract.

17. Withdrawal from this Procurement Process

- 17.1. Candidates are required to notify the Contracting Authority immediately, via the eTenders website, if at any stage they decide to withdraw from this Procurement Process.

18. Tax Clearance Status

- 18.1. It will be a condition for the award of the Contract that the successful Tenderer shall, for the term of the Contract, comply with all EU and domestic tax laws.
- 18.2. Prior to the award of the Contract, the successful Tenderer(s) will be required to supply their Tax Clearance Access Number and Tax Reference Number to facilitate online verification of their tax status by the Contracting Authority. By supplying these numbers, the successful Tenderer(s) acknowledges and agrees that the Contracting Authority has permission to verify their tax cleared position online.

19. Costs

- 19.1. All costs and expenses incurred in connection with participating in the Procurement Process including, but not limited to, the preparation and making of a Submission shall be borne by the Candidate. By participating in the Procurement Process the Candidate agrees that the Contracting Authority shall not in any way become responsible for such costs.

20. Language

- 20.1. All documentation submitted in response to or in relation to this RTP shall be in the English language. In circumstances in which an original document is not in the English language, the respective Candidate must provide an English translation certified as accurate by the translator, together with a copy of the original document.

- 20.2. Failure to comply with this rule may result in the disqualification of a Candidate.

21. Freedom of Information, Confidentiality, AI Tools and Publicity

- 21.1. Each of the parties will undertake to use their reasonable endeavours to hold confidential any confidential information received from the other party, subject to the Contracting Authority's obligations under law, including (if applicable) the provisions of the Freedom of Information Legislation.

- 21.2. The Candidate agrees that, should it wish any confidential information supplied by it to the Contracting Authority not to be disclosed (because of its commercial sensitivity), it will, when supplying such information, identify same and specify the reasons for its sensitivity in Part 4 of the Response Document.

- 21.3. The Contracting Authority will endeavour to consult with the Candidate about such sensitive information before making a decision regarding release of such information under the Freedom of Information Legislation. However, the Contracting Authority will give no undertaking or assurance that such information will not be released under the provisions of the Freedom of Information Legislation, and the final decision on whether or not to release such information rests with the Contracting Authority or as set out in the Freedom of Information Legislation.

- 21.4. The Procurement Documents remain the property of the Contracting Authority and are issued only in connection with the Procurement Process. The Procurement Documents may not be copied, and their contents may not be divulged to any third party without the prior written consent of the Contracting Authority. All information contained in the Procurement Documents must be treated in the strictest confidence by the Candidate. Any third party involved in completing the Submission must also comply with these confidentiality requirements.

- 21.5. Without prejudice to the confidentiality and Freedom of Information Legislation requirements referred to above, the Contracting Authority reserves the right, at its discretion, to publicise, or otherwise disclose, to any third party, information regarding the Procurement Process, the nomination of Candidates (including, without limitation, details of their respective representatives, advisors, consultants, contractors, servants and/or agents), the successful Tenderer or the award of the Contract
- 21.6. A Candidate will not, by itself, its servants, agents, or subcontractors, communicate with the press, television, radio or other media on, or otherwise use information on, any matter concerning the Procurement Process without the express permission of the Contracting Authority.
- 21.7. The Contracting Authority is aware of the use of generative Artificial Intelligence tools and Large Language Models (“AI Tools”) in business and in the preparation of responses in procurement processes. While the use of AI Tools in responding to this Competition is not prohibited, it is critical that Candidates maintain control of, and responsibility for, their Submission. Candidates must not use multi-tenant AI Tools and/or use the Procurement Documents with an AI Tool that will use the Procurement Documents to train itself or similar models or AI Tools. Candidates must not use the Procurement Documents with AI Tools for any other purpose than to prepare a Submission. Any AI Tool used by a Candidate as part of this Procurement Process must comply with all applicable legislation in addition to all other requirements of the Procurement Documents, including the AI Act and the Data Protection Laws as defined herein. In responding to this RTP, Candidates are required to declare if and where AI Tools have been used to draft, develop, inform or augment any part of their Submission. This declaration is included in Part 4 of the Response Document, and the Contracting Authority reserves the right to request further information from a Candidate on their use of AI Tools.
- 21.8. A Procurement Evaluation Group, convened for the purposes of evaluating this competition, will assess Response Documents based on the information provided by a Candidate regardless of how the Submission was generated. Any declarations made on the use, or non-use, of AI Tools will not influence the evaluation process or outcome provided that such declaration is true and accurate. However, should the Contracting Authority determine that any declaration made in this regard by the Candidate is incomplete or has been incorrectly or inaccurately completed, then the Candidate’s Submission may be deemed to be non-compliant and may not be evaluated.

22. Sanctions against Russia

- 22.1. Regulation (EU) No 833/2014 concerning restrictive measures in view of Russia's actions destabilising the situation in Ukraine as amended by Council Regulation (EU) 2022/576 of 8 April 2022 Council Regulation (EU) 2022/1269 of 21 July 2022 and Council Regulation (EU) 2023/1214 of June 2023 (and as may be further emended) prohibits the award of any public or concession contract to any of the entities set out in Article 5k 1(a) to (c).
- 22.2. It is a requirement of this Procurement Process that all Candidates, and where the Candidate is a Consortium, all Consortium Members and Other Entities whose resources are relied upon in order to participate in this Procurement Process are not any of the entities set out in Article 5k 1(a) to 1(c) Regulation (EU) No 833/2014 of 31 July 2014 (as amended by Council Regulation (EU) 2022/576 of 8 April 2022.).
- 22.3. If this requirement is not satisfied, the Candidate will be eliminated from this Procurement Process, save that where an entity falling within the category of economic operators identified in Article 5k 1(a) to 1(c) is an entity being relied upon, in which case the Contracting Authority reserves the right to permit the Candidate to replace such entity (where the Contracting Authority is satisfied that this would be permitted by applicable law).
- 22.4. Paragraphs 6 to 8 of Part 4D of the Response Document requires Candidates to confirm that the Candidate, Consortium Members and Other Entities are not any of the entities set out in Article 5k 1(a) to (c) of Regulation (EU) No 833/2014 as amended by Council Regulation (EU) 2022/576 of 8 April 2022.

23. Data Protection

- 23.1. "Data Protection Laws" means all applicable national and EU data protection laws, regulations and guidelines including but not limited to the Data Protection Acts 1998 to 2018, 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 (GDPR), and any guidelines and codes of practice issued by the Office of the Data Protection Commission or other supervisory authority for data protection in Ireland from time to time.
- 23.2. The Contracting Authority will be a Data Controller (where Data 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 Candidate as part of this Procurement Process.

23.3. By participating in this Procurement Process, the Candidate, as Data Controller in respect of any Personal Data provided by it in its Submission, confirms that all Data Subjects (where Data Subject has the meaning given under the Data Protection Laws) whose Personal Data is being provided by the Candidate have consented to the processing of such Personal Data by the Candidate, the Contracting Authority, the Procurement Evaluation Group and the supplier of the etenders.gov.ie website, for the purposes of the participation of the Candidate in this Procurement Process or that the Candidate otherwise has a legal basis for providing such Personal Data to the Contracting Authority for the purposes of its participation in this Procurement Process.

24. International Procurement Instrument

24.1. The Contracting Authority would refer Candidates to the provisions of Regulation (EU) 2022/1031 on the access of third country economic operators, goods and services to the Union's public procurement and concession markets and procedures supporting negotiations on access of Union economic operators, goods and services to the public procurement and concession markets of third countries (International Procurement Instrument – IPI), and their obligation to comply therewith.

24.2. In particular, Candidates should note in Article 6 of Regulation (EU) 2022/1031, the obligations for a Contracting Authority in the context of a procurement procedure where the EU Commission has adopted an IPI measure.

25. Children First

25.1. Where any of the successful Tenderer's personnel and/or sub-contractors carry out any work or activity, a necessary and regular part of which consists mainly of the successful Tenderer's personnel or sub-contractors having access to, or contact with children in any of the types of establishments listed in Schedule 1 of the Children First Act 2015 (which for the avoidance of doubt includes any hospital, hospice, health care centre or other centre which receives, treats or otherwise provides physical or mental health services to children), the services provided by the successful Tenderer shall be regarded as "Relevant Services" for the purposes of the Children First Act, 2015 (the "Children First Act") and the successful Tenderer shall comply with all applicable obligations arising under:

- the Children First Act 2015 (as amended, with amendments noted as of 9 April 2026);
- the Children First National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children 2017 (as updated, including addendums of January 2019 and April 2025); and
- the HSE National Child Protection and Welfare Policy 2026 (effective 1 March 2026) and its accompanying guides.

26. Law and Jurisdiction

26.1. Irish law is applicable to this RTP, the Procurement Documents, and to the Procurement Process. The Irish Courts shall have exclusive jurisdiction in relation to any disputes arising from the RTP, the Procurement Documents and the Procurement Process.

Section C – Evaluation of Submissions

1. Instructions

1.1. The Contracting Authority will review and evaluate Submissions in the following manner:

- 1.1.1. The Contracting Authority will initially undertake a compliance check of Submissions to ensure that they are complete in all respects (including the Part 4 of the Response Document) and compliant with the terms and rules set out in this RTP. Incomplete or non-compliant Submissions may be rejected (subject to the Contracting Authority's right under the Procurement Regulations and paragraph 16 of Section B of this RTP to clarify or query a Candidate's Submission).
- 1.1.2. Submissions will be examined to determine if there are any exclusion grounds under Regulation 57 of the Procurement Regulations that apply to the Candidate (including Consortium Members and Other Entities). If a relevant exclusion ground or grounds apply, the Contracting Authority will examine any information provided by the Candidate in accordance with Regulation 57(6) and (7) of the Procurement Regulations to determine the reliability of the Candidate (including Consortium Members and Other Entities). If the Contracting Authority views the additional information as insufficient to demonstrate reliability, the Submission will be rejected and excluded from the Procurement Process.
- 1.1.3. Submissions will then be examined to determine whether the Candidate has self-certified that it meets all of the selection criteria set out in Part 2 of the Response Document. If a Candidate has failed to self-certify that it meets all of the selection criteria set out in Part 2, the Submission may be rejected and excluded from the Procurement Process.
- 1.1.4. Submissions will then be examined to determine whether the Candidate meets all of the selection criteria set out in Part 2 of the Response Document. If a Candidate fails to meet all of the selection criteria set out in Part 2, the Submission will be rejected and excluded from the Procurement Process.
- 1.1.5. Submissions will then be examined to determine whether the Candidate has self-certified that it meets all of the selection criteria set out in Part 3 of the Response Document. If a Candidate has failed to self-certify that it meets all of the selection criteria set out in Part 3, the Submission may be rejected and excluded from the Procurement Process.

- 1.1.6. Submissions that comply with 1.1.5 will then proceed to have Part 3 of the Response Document scored by the Procurement Evaluation Group in accordance with the scoring methodology set out under Approach to Evaluation below.

2. Approach to Evaluation

2.1. The selection criteria consist of two different elements:

2.1.1. “Pass/Fail” questions: Candidates whose responses are considered to have passed all of these criteria will proceed to be assessed against the scored questions. Candidates whose responses are considered to have failed one or more of these criteria will be rejected and excluded from the Procurement Process. For responses to all of the requirements set out under paragraph 4.2 below, if the Contracting Authority views the information as insufficient to demonstrate the Candidate’s financial stability the Submission will be rejected and excluded from the Procurement Process.

2.1.2. Scored questions: Candidates who have passed all of the pass/fail questions will have their responses to the scored questions in Part 3 of the Response Document scored in accordance with the scoring methodologies set out in Table A and Table B of this Section C – Evaluation of Submissions.

3. Exclusion Grounds (Pass/Fail)

3.1. European Single Procurement Document (ESPD) (Pass/Fail)

Candidates are required to complete and sign the ESPD as part of their Submission. Candidates should refer to Section C paragraph 1, the Response Document Part 1 and Section D – Guidance for Completion of this RTP for guidance on completion of the Submission.

Reference	Exclusion	Evaluation Methodology
ESPD Part IIIA Mandatory Exclusion Grounds Relating to Criminal Convictions	Regulation 57 (1)	Pass or Fail A “No” Statement will result in a “Pass”. A “Yes” Statement will result in a “Fail” and exclusion from the Procurement Process unless evidence is provided in the ESPD to demonstrate reliability in accordance with Regulation 57 (6) (self-cleaning) to the satisfaction of the Contracting Authority.

ESPD Part IIIB Mandatory Exclusion Grounds Relating to the Payment of Taxes or Social Security Contributions	Regulation 57 (2)	Pass or Fail A “No” statement will result in a “Pass”. A “Yes” Statement will result in a “Fail” and exclusion from the Procurement Process unless evidence is provided in the ESPD to demonstrate the fulfilment of obligations in accordance with Regulation 57 (2).
ESPD Part IIIC Discretionary Exclusion Grounds Relating to Insolvency, Conflicts of Interests or Professional Misconduct	Regulation 57 (4)	Pass or Fail A “No” statement will result in a “Pass”. A “Yes” Statement will result in a “Fail” and exclusion from the Procurement Process unless evidence is provided in the ESPD to demonstrate reliability in accordance with Regulation 57 (6) (self-cleaning) to the satisfaction of the Contracting Authority.
ESPD Part VI Concluding Statements		Pass or Fail The ESPD must be signed and dated by an appropriate authorised officer.

3.2.HSE Cyber Security Baseline (Stage 1) Checklist

Candidates are required to complete the HSE Cyber Security Baseline (Stage 1) Checklist. A response of 'No' to any question will result in exclusion of the candidate from this procurement process, other than where an N/A response is expressly permitted.

4. Evaluation of Financial Standing and Technical and Professional Ability

4.1. Candidates (and where the Candidate is a Consortium, each Consortium Member) must declare by way of Part 2 of the Response Document that they satisfy the Economic and Financial Standing requirements set out at paragraph 4.2. If the Candidate or any member of the Candidate is relying on a separate entity (including but not limited to a parent company) for the purposes of meeting the requirements of this criterion 4.2 (and sub-criterion therein), information in this section 4.2 must be provided by the entity being relied upon in respect of the sub-criterion for which reliance is required.

4.2. The Economic and Financial Standing requirements are as follows and **will each be assessed on a Pass/Fail basis**. For responses to all questions in this section, if the Contracting Authority views the information, including the supporting documentation to be submitted, as insufficient to demonstrate the Candidate's financial stability the Submission may be rejected and result in exclusion of the Candidate from this Procurement Process.

Candidates should refer to Section C paragraph 1, Part 2 of the Response Document and RTP Section D – Guidance for Completion for guidance on completion of the Submission.

(i) Economic and Financial Standing - Turnover (Pass/Fail)

The Candidate must confirm that it meets (or that it is relying on an Other Entity/Entities which meets) the minimum annual turnover requirement of €500,000 (ex VAT) for each of the last three (3) financial years.

Where the Candidate consists of a Consortium, the Candidate must confirm that the aggregate average turnover of the Consortium meets or exceeds €500,000 for the last three (3) financial years (and at least one member of the Consortium has a turnover of €250,000 (ex VAT) per annum for each of the last three (3) financial years with the other member(s) having a minimum combined turnover equal to or in excess of €250,000 (ex VAT) for each of the last three (3) financial years.

Candidates relying on the financial capacity of a parent/third party must submit an undertaking duly evidenced from the entity that they will place the necessary financial resources at the disposal of the Candidate.

If the date of establishment of the Candidate means the Candidate cannot provide yearly turnover for 3 years, the Candidate must submit statements of yearly turnover for each year the Candidate (or member of the Candidate, or entity being relied upon) has been established to demonstrate they have necessary financial standing.

Candidates may be required to demonstrate the basis for the statements provided in order to allow the Contracting Authority to verify accuracy. If, for a reason deemed valid by the Contracting Authority, the evidence sought cannot be provided then alternative evidence which is considered appropriate by the Contracting Authority may be provided.

(ii) Outstanding Claims, Litigation or Judgement

The Candidate (and where the Candidate is a Consortium, **each Consortium Member**, and where a Candidate proposes to rely on the resources of an Other Entity, the **Other Entity**) **must** confirm that it will provide either (a) a description of any material pending or threatened tax or other regulatory investigations into the affairs of the Candidate, or (b) confirmation that no such investigations are pending or threatened. The Candidate (and where the Candidate is a Consortium, each Consortium Member) must confirm that it will provide either:

- (a) a statement regarding any material outstanding judgements or court orders or material pending litigation or pending threatened litigation or other legal proceedings affecting itself, any proposed Subcontractor or any Consortium Member, for which specific provision has not been made within the latest set of audited financial statements **or**
- (b) confirmation that no such judgements, court orders, litigation or proceedings are outstanding, pending or threatened.

(iii) Banker's Letter (Pass/Fail)

The Candidate (and where the Candidate is a Consortium, **each Consortium Member**, and where a Candidate proposes to rely on the resources of an Other Entity, the **Other Entity**) **must** submit as part of its Submission a signed statement, dated within the last 6 months, from their principal bankers:

- (a) Stating the length (in years) of the banking relationship.
- (b) Confirming that the bank is the Candidate's/Consortium Member's principal banker;
- (c) Confirming that all accounts held by the entity are currently in good standing; and
- (d) Confirming they have the financial capacity to undertake a contract of this value.

(iv) Insurance Levels (Pass/Fail)

The Candidate must confirm and provide evidence to confirm that it (or if the Candidate is a Consortium, that the Lead Consortium Member) has in place (or has the ability to obtain prior to Contract award) insurances of the following levels (as a minimum):

Insurance Type	Insurance Level
Product Liability Insurance	€6.5m limit for any one claim and in the aggregate per period of insurance
Professional Indemnity Insurance	€6.5m limit for any one claim per period of insurance
Public Liability Insurance	€6.5m limit for any one claim or series of claims arising out of a single occurrence per period of insurance
Employer's Liability Insurance	€13m limit for any one claim or series of claims arising out of a single occurrence and unlimited in the period of insurance

Cyber Insurance	€6.5m limit for any one claim and in the aggregate per insurance policy year
Crime Insurance	€1m limit for any one claim

(Note: it is only if the Candidate is ultimately successful in this Procurement Process that it will be required to obtain and hold the types and levels of insurance as specified above).

The Candidate (and where the Candidate is a Consortium, **the Lead Consortium Member**) is required to evidence that it has in place or has the ability to obtain insurance at the levels set out in the table above. It must do this by providing a letter from the Candidate's insurance broker clearly (or letters from the Candidate's insurance brokers) stating that it accepts that the Candidate has the ability to obtain each of the insurances at the required level should the Candidate be ultimately successful.

4.3. Evaluation of Technical and Professional Ability

Candidates should refer to Part 3 of the Response Document and RTP Section D – Guidance for Completion for guidance on completion of the Submission. The Contracting Authority will assess the responses provided in Part 3 of the Response Document in order to determine the capacity of the Candidate to deliver the Contract.

4.3.1. Part 3 of the Response Document requires Candidates to provide details of their organisational capacity and three (3) Project References where they have provided integration platforms of a similar size, scale, scope, and complexity. Key parameters that the Procurement Evaluation Group will consider when comparing similarity to the Contracting Authority's requirements in descending order of importance, are:

- (i) Core functional scope – see Section A 2.5 and Appendix 2 of this RTP Document.
- (ii) Number and complexity of integrations supported

- 4.3.2. Candidates should more generally ensure they read this document fully to ensure they gain a good understanding of the nature and scale of the Services required and the setting in which they will be implemented in order to inform their selection of appropriate Project References.
- 4.3.3. The Contracting Authority reserves the right to contact the person nominated in the Project References for verification purposes without prior notice to Candidates.
- 4.3.4. The Contracting Authority reserves the right to verify references provided by the Candidates in their Submission. References may be verified by telephone interview or in writing and will have the purpose of confirming the information that Candidates provide as part of Submissions.
- 4.3.5. The Contracting Authority reserves the right to undertake Project Reference site visits throughout the Procurement Process.
- 4.3.6. All Project References must have been implemented and be currently operational prior to the date the contract notice for the Procurement Process is published in the OJEU (implemented and operational means the service/solution provided by the Candidate is in active use and the Candidate is receiving regular service payments).
- 4.3.7. Table A on the following pages sets out fourteen (14) scored criteria (of which two are multi-part questions leading to twenty-two (22) required answers which will be scored), along with nine (9) Pass/Fail criteria and six (6) unscored questions for information only (the responses to these 'information only' queries are provided to ensure that the Contracting Authority is provided the full context, but for avoidance of doubt this information shall not be qualitatively scored as part of the evaluation). For detailed questions, refer to the Response Document. In total 1,000 marks are available for the Technical and Professional Ability criteria.

Table A:

Ref	Award Criteria Description	Marks Available	MQT	F	E	D	C	B	A
PART 1: Candidate Information									
	Candidate Information (info only)	N/A	N/A						
	ESPD Submission	Pass/Fail	Pass						
	HSE Cyber Security Baseline (Stage 1)	Pass/Fail	Pass						
PART 2: Financial Standing									
	Turnover	Pass/Fail	Pass						
	Outstanding Claims, Litigation or Judgement	Pass/Fail	Pass						
	Banker's Letter (Pass/Fail)	Pass/Fail	Pass						
	Insurance Level	Pass/Fail	Pass						
PART 3: Technical and Professional Ability Criteria									
PART 3A: Organisational & Technical Resources and Capacity									
A.1	Organisational & Technical Capacity (info only)	N/A	N/A						
PART 3B: Experience - Reference Projects (225 marks total)									
B.1a	Project Reference 1 – Details (info only)	N/A	N/A						
B.1b	Project Reference 1 – Description (Requires a Pass for Customer Confirmation B.1.c to score higher than 0)	75	31	0	1-14	15-29	30-44	45-59	60-75
B.1c	Project Reference 1 – Customer Confirmation	Pass/Fail	Pass						
B.2a	Project Reference 2 – Details (info only)	N/A	N/A						

Ref	Award Criteria Description	Marks Available	MQT	F	E	D	C	B	A
B.2b	Project Reference 2 – Description (Requires a Pass for Customer Confirmation B.2.c to score higher than 0)	75	31	0	1-14	15-29	30-44	45-59	60-75
B.2c	Project Reference 2 – Customer Confirmation	Pass/Fail	Pass						
B.3a	Project Reference 3 – Details (info only)	N/A	N/A						
B.3b	Project Reference 3 – Description (Requires a Pass for Customer Confirmation B.3.c to score higher than 0)	75	31	0	1-14	15-29	30-44	45-59	60-75
B.3c	Project Reference 3 – Customer Confirmation	Pass/Fail	Pass						
PART 3C: Experience - Performance of Services (775 marks total)									
C.1	Integration (<i>total of parts i. to vii. below</i>)	120							
	i: Functionality/Usability/Orchestration	15	7	0	1-3	4-6	7-9	10-12	13-15
	ii: Integration	30	13	0	1-6	7-12	13-18	19-24	25-30
	iii: API Lifecycle/FHIR API Management	20	9	0	1-4	5-8	9-12	13-16	17-20
	iv: De-duplication/Normalisation of patient Identifiers	10	5	0	1-2	3-4	5-6	7-8	9-10
	v: Interoperability	20	9	0	1-4	5-8	9-12	13-16	17-20
	vi: Queue Management	10	5	0	1-2	3-4	5-6	7-8	9-10
	vii: Interface Management	15	7	0	1-3	4-6	7-9	10-12	13-15
C.2	Service Integrity and Recoverability	65	27	0	1-13	14-26	27-39	40-52	53-65
C.3	Scalability & Availability (<i>total of parts i. to iii. below</i>)	95							
	i. Performance	30	13	0	1-6	7-12	13-18	19-24	25-30

Ref	Award Criteria Description	Marks Available	MQT	F	E	D	C	B	A
	ii. Reliability	30	13	0	1-6	7-12	13-18	19-24	25-30
	iii. Scalability	35	15	0	1-7	8-14	15-21	22-28	29-35
C.4	Security & Compliance	110	45	0	1-22	23-44	45-66	67-88	89-110
C.5	Observability & Reporting	80	33	0	1-16	17-32	33-48	49-64	65-80
C.6	Implementation	105	43	0	1-21	22-42	43-63	64-84	85-105
C.7	Training	20	9	0	1-4	5-8	9-12	13-16	17-20
C.8	Support & SLAs	50	21	0	1-10	11-20	21-30	31-40	41-50
C.9	Artificial Intelligence	25	N/A	0	1-5	6-10	11-15	16-20	21-25
C.10	Vendor Hosting & Delivery Model	80	33	0	1-16	17-32	33-48	49-64	65-80
C.11	Data Management	25	11	0	1-5	6-10	11-15	16-20	21-25
TOTAL SCORED MARKS									
		1000							

4.3.8. **Table B** below sets out the scoring bands A-F which will be used by the Procurement Evaluation Group to evaluate responses to each of the Questions set out in sections B and C above. For each question, each of the scoring bands A-F has an associated range of marks as per Table A above. The Procurement Evaluation Group, using its expertise, will determine the appropriate mark within each range to be awarded to each response.

Table B:

Band	Description
A	Excellent evidence/assurance of the Candidate's ability/capability/capacity provided. The response is comprehensive and demonstrates an excellent range/depth of relevant experience.
B	Very good evidence/assurance of the Candidate's ability/capability/capacity provided. The response demonstrates a very good range/depth of relevant experience.
C	Adequate / good evidence/assurance of the Candidate's ability/capability/capacity provided. The response demonstrates an adequate/good range/depth of relevant experience.
D	Limited evidence/assurance of the Candidate's ability/capability/capacity provided. The response demonstrates a limited range/depth of relevant experience.
E	Minimal or poor evidence/assurance of the Candidate's ability/capability/capacity provided. The response demonstrates a poor range/depth of relevant experience
F	Nil or inadequate evidence/assurance of the Candidate's ability/capability/capacity provided. The response fails to demonstrate range/depth of relevant experience.

- 4.3.9. Candidates should note that they must achieve each Minimum Qualifying Threshold (MQT) score specified by Table A. Failure to achieve the MQT in any of these areas will result in elimination from the Procurement Process.
- 4.3.10. Following scoring, the HSE reserves the right to take up references (as set out in paragraphs 4.3.3 to 4.3.5 above) and verify for each Project Reference to check the accuracy of the information provided. If as part of this process, it is determined that false or misleading information has been submitted, this may result in the Candidate being excluded from further participation in the Procurement Process. It is envisaged that this process will be conducted for each Candidate shortlisted. If the reference site call supports the information provided, the Candidate's score(s) achieved following assessment of the Project Reference(s) will remain unchanged. If the reference site call does not support the information provided, the Candidate's relevant score(s) for Project References may be reduced in accordance with the scoring methodology set out above. This may result in the Candidate(s) no longer being ranked within the top scoring Candidates or the elimination of the Candidate in the event that a Minimum Score Required is no longer satisfied.
- 4.3.11. Following finalisation of the scores for Technical and Professional Ability and provided the Candidates have passed all of the Pass/Fail questions in the Response Document, the Candidates will be ranked from highest to lowest. Where the rank order results in Candidates having the same overall scores for Technical & Professional Ability, then priority will be given to the Candidate or Candidates having the highest score in responses to (in cascading order):
- I. Section C: Experience – Performance of Services C1, C4 and C6
 - II. Section C: Experience – Performance of Services C2, C3, C5 and C10
 - III. Section C: Experience – Performance of Services C7, C8, C9 and C11
 - IV. Section B: Experience – Reference Projects

In the unlikely event of the rules set out above failing to determine preferred Candidates for progression, the preferred Candidate responses shall be selected on the basis of random selection. In such circumstances, representatives from Candidate firms or Consortia that achieved the same highest marks will be invited to attend a meeting at the Contracting Authorities premises to observe the random selection. Candidate firms or Consortia will be notified in advance of the time/date and location of the random selection procedure.

- 4.3.12. Provided that there are a sufficient number of suitable Candidates, the Contracting Authority anticipates that the four (4) highest ranked Candidates will be shortlisted and invited to participate in the Tender Stage.

Section D – Guidance for Completion

1. Preparing a Submission

Candidates are required to answer all questions contained within the Response Document and must provide all supporting documentation requested, including the ESPD in order to provide a Submission for this Procurement Process.

2. Part 1 Candidate Information

- a) The Candidate must complete and submit Part 1 of the Response Document (Candidate Information). In the case of a Consortium, each Consortium Member must also separately complete and submit Part 1 of the Response Document.
- b) Where a Candidate relies on the capacities of Other Entities (for example, parent/group companies or unrelated entities) in order to demonstrate a Candidate's economic and financial standing and/or technical and professional ability, the Other Entity must separately complete and submit Part 1 (Candidate Information).
- c) In order to demonstrate a Candidate's economic and financial standing and/or technical and professional ability, a Candidate may rely on the capacities of Other Entities (for example, parent/group companies or unrelated entities). In such cases the Candidate must prove to the satisfaction of the Contracting Authority that it will have the necessary resources at its disposal when required, the Candidate is required to submit a letter of undertaking from the Other Entity to this effect as part of its Submission.

2.1. ESPD

The relevant sections of the ESPD and the Response Document which Candidates must complete are set out below.

- a) The ESPD may be completed using the ESPD Template provided. Alternatively, an electronic ESPD may be generated by the Candidate on the eTenders website portal, downloaded and submitted as an appendix.
- b) Candidates are required to complete Part II, Part III, and Part VI the ESPD as part of their Submission. The relevant sections of the ESPD and the Response Document which Candidates must complete are set out below.
- c) Candidates should clearly state in the appropriate section(s) of the ESPD whether the Candidate is a Consortium. If the Candidate is a Consortium, each Consortium Member must complete and submit a separate ESPD setting out the information required under Parts IIA, IIB, III, and VI.
- d) Candidates should complete Parts IIA and IIB which is for information only.
- e) Candidates should clearly state in Part IIC of the ESPD whether the Candidate is relying on the capacities of Other Entities in order to meet the selection criteria. A separate ESPD must be provided by each Other Entity being relied upon, setting out the information required under Parts IIA, IIB, and all of Part III of the ESPD, and insofar as it is relevant for the specific capacity or capacities on which the Candidate relies, information in the Response Document(s) for each of the entities concerned.

- f) Candidates should also clearly state at Part IID of the ESPD whether the Candidate intends to subcontract any share of the Contract to third parties (but does not intend to rely on those third parties in order to meet the selection criteria).
- g) Candidates should provide information in Part III of the ESPD, which will determine if there are any exclusion grounds that apply under Regulation 57 of the Procurement Regulations.
- h) The ESPD must be signed by an authorised representative in Part VI.

2.2.HSE Cyber Security Baseline (Stage 1) Checklist

Candidates must state yes or no to show that indicate whether or not they meet all of the requirements contained within the checklist.

3. Part 2 Financial Standing Criteria

- a) The Candidate must complete and submit Part 2 (Financial Standing Criteria) Response Document and the supporting documents requested therein.
- b) The Candidate must self-certify that they meet the selection criteria in Part 2 of Response Document. Additional supporting documentation may be requested from the successful Tenderer prior to contract award and will be a condition of contract.
- c) In the case of a Consortium, each Consortium Member must also separately complete and submit Part 2 (Financial Standing Criteria) of the Response Document, and the supporting documents requested.
- d) Where a Candidate relies on the capacities of Other Entities (for example, parent/group companies or unrelated entities) in order to demonstrate a Candidate's economic and financial standing and/or technical and professional ability, the Other Entity must separately complete and submit Part 2 (Financial Standing) and the supporting documentation requested.
- e) The Candidate must provide insurance broker letter(s) as set out in paragraph 4.2 (iv) of Section C.

4. Part 3 Technical and Professional Ability Criteria

- a) The Candidate must complete Part 3 Technical and Professional Ability Criteria in full. Part 3 of the Response Document requires Candidates to provide details of their organisational capacity and three (3) Project References completed within the five (5) years preceding the publication date of this document.
- b) The Candidate must provide for each of the Project References a signed and dated confirmation letter on headed stationery from the relevant customer confirming that the details provided in the Project Reference are a true reflection of the facts.
- c) The Candidate must self-certify that it meets the selection criteria in the Part 3 of the Response Document.
- d) In the case of a Consortium, only one consolidated response to the Part 3 of the Response Document (Technical and Professional Ability Criteria) is required (and only one such consolidated response will be accepted by the Contracting Authority) from a Consortium.

- e) To enable the HSE to evaluate the responses to each question of Part 3 of the Response Document, the Candidate may include a limited number of images or tables, provided that total number of pages does not exceed the limit specified in the question. Any pages in excess of this limit will not be considered for evaluation purposes.
- f) Where a Consortium Member/s or Other Entity/Entities were involved in the delivery of the cited Project References, please ensure that the role of such entities is made clear in the responses to the questions in this Part 3 of the Response Document.
- g) Please note that certain questions require the Candidate to also provide information on behalf of each Other Entity who delivered the cited Project Reference and in the case of Consortia, all Consortium Members (Guidance is provided in the question wording where this is required.)

5. Part 4 Concluding Statements

- a) The Candidate must complete Part 4 of the Response Document, Concluding Statements. This comprises the Confidentiality, Conflict of Interest and the Concluding Statement. This should be signed by an authorised officer of the Candidate.
- b) Candidates should state if any of the information supplied by them in their Submissions is confidential or commercially sensitive and should not be disclosed in response to a request for information under the Freedom of Information Legislation. Candidates should state why they consider the information to be confidential or commercially sensitive.
- c) Candidates must complete the Conflict of Interest Declaration, declaring any actual or potential conflict of interest involving a Candidate, including conflicts associated with any current or previous work undertaken, or any relationship that may reasonably be perceived to potentially conflict or impact on their ability to participate in the Procurement Process or fulfil the requirements of the Contract.
- d) In the case of a Consortium, Part 4 of the Response Document should be completed on behalf of the Consortium by the Lead Consortium Member, unless in respect of the signed declaration of the statements included in paragraphs 6 to 8 of Part 4D, the Contracting Authority requests each Consortium member provides a signed declaration.
- e) The Concluding Statement must be signed by an authorized representative of the Candidate, and in the case of a Consortium by the Lead Consortium Member.

6. General Guidance

- a) All questions must be answered as accurately and concisely as possible. If the question is not relevant, the words 'not applicable' must be inserted with an explanation detailing why it is not relevant.
- b) All information requested should be provided in the order and format detailed within the Response Document. Please do not provide organisational promotional material as the basis of your response to any of the questions as only responses provided in the requested format will be evaluated.

- c) Candidates may expand the response boxes/tables in the Response Document if required, but Candidates may not amend the heading or questions as they appear, or the order in which they appear.
- d) When returning documents, documents should be named in the following manner:
 - a. TENDERNAME HSE28439 EiPaaS Response.docx,
 - b. TENDERNAME HSE28439 EiPaaS Cyber Security.docx
 - c. TENDERNAME HSE28439 EiPaaS ESPD.docx
- e) The response documents, and any additional documents requested, must be formatted in Adobe PDF or MS Word (2016 or later), font Arial, font size 11 and not exceeding the specified page limit per question/ per reference. Any response in excess of the page limit indicated will not be read beyond the page limit and this part beyond the page limit will not be considered for evaluation purposes.
- f) Where appropriate, tables may be included as part of the response. However, any text within the table must be in a font no smaller than size 9 (Arial) and will contribute to the page number limit.
- g) Where appropriate, graphics/illustrations may be included as part of the response. However, any text accompanying the graphic must be in a font size 11 (Arial) and will contribute to the page number limit.
- h) Unclear or illegible tables, screen shots, graphics/illustrations will not be accepted.
- i) Embedded documents or videos (or equivalent) will not be accepted and will not be reviewed. Any relevant additional document requested must be provided as a clearly referenced appendix.
- j) Hyperlinks to appendices or external websites or additional reading material will not be accepted. Hyperlinks provided will not be reviewed.
- k) All documentation submitted in response to this Response Document shall be in the English language.
- l) Capitalised terms and expressions used in this document shall have the meaning given to them in Appendix 1 of the RTP save to the extent that the context or express provisions of this document otherwise require.

If you have any queries or problems completing the Response Document, please message the Contracting Authority via eTenders following the procedure set out in paragraph 9 of Section B of this document.

Appendix 1 – Glossary of Terms

Term	Definition
Candidate	A single entity or Consortium submitting a response to the RTP.
Clarification Deadline	The final time and date for receipt of Candidates' questions or requests for clarification on eTenders.
Competition	The tender competition to which this RTP relates.
Consortium	A group or partnership of entities formed to constitute a Candidate.
Consortium Member	An individual entity within a Consortium.
Contract	The executed agreement between the successful Tenderer and the Contracting Authority to deliver the Services.
Contracting Authority	The HSE is the contracting authority ("Contracting Authority") for this public procurement competition on its own behalf and on behalf of the following: (a) the HSE's People ("HSE's People" means the HSE's members, officers, employees, servants or agents including other HSE third party service providers (including software and hardware design, implementation, maintenance and support, managed services and/or customisation service providers), contractors and sub-contractors.); (b) all service providers to the HSE falling (now or in the future) under (or considered and/or treated by the HSE, in its sole discretion, as falling under) Section 38 of the Health Act 2004 (as amended) (a "Section 38 Body"); (c) all bodies/entities falling (now or in the future) under (or considered and/or treated by the HSE, in its sole discretion, as falling under) Section 39 of the Health Act 2004 (as amended) (a "Section 39 Body"); (d) such services providers', bodies' and/or entities' (under (c) and (d) above) successors, transferees, replacements and/or assigns); and (e) all publicly funded hospitals and health agencies. Candidates should note that any contract entered into by the Contracting Authority pursuant to this

	Competition (and/or the rights, obligations and liabilities under such Contract) may be assigned, novated and/or otherwise disposed in favour of any Public Body (defined below) or to a body other than a Public Body (including any private sector body) which performs any of the functions that previously had been performed by the Contracting Authority (or any constituent member of the Contracting Authority), and by submitting a Submission, Candidates so acknowledge and confirm. ("Public Body" means any of (a) a Department of State; (b) an entity established by or under any Irish enactment (other than the Companies Acts); (c) any other entity established (other than under the Companies Acts) or appointed by the Government or a Minister of the Government, including an entity established (other than under the Companies Acts) by a Minister of the Government under any scheme; (d) a company (within the meaning of the Companies Acts) a majority of the shares in which are held by or on behalf of a Minister of the Government; (e) a subsidiary (within the meaning of the Companies Acts) of a company to which paragraph (d) relates; (f) an entity (other than a subsidiary to which paragraph (e) relates) that is directly or indirectly controlled by an entity to which paragraph (b), (c), (d) or (e) relates; (g) a higher education institution in receipt of public funding (h) a Section 38 Body; and/or (i) a Section 39 Body.)
Cyber Insurance	Insurance to cover risks related to cybersecurity breaches, required as part of the Contract.
Due Diligence	The process of final verification and investigation conducted by the Contracting Authority with the successful Tenderer prior to contract award, including verification of financial standing, technical capability, and absence of exclusion grounds.
Economic Operator	An individual or organization engaged in economic activities that participates in the Procurement Process.
eTenders	The official Irish government platform for public procurement.

European Single Procurement Document (ESPD)	The European Single Procurement Document template that must be completed by each Candidate (including each Consortium Member and, where there is reliance on the resources of an Other Entity, each Other Entity upon whose resources the Candidate or Consortium Member relies). Alternatively, an electronic ESPD may be filled out on the eTenders website portal, downloaded and submitted as an appendix.
Group of Companies	As defined in Section 8 of the Companies Act 2014.
Health Service Executive (HSE)	The national healthcare provider in Ireland and the Contracting Authority for this Procurement Process.
HL7 FHIR	A set of standards for exchanging healthcare information electronically.
Lead Consortium Member	The Consortium Member that will enter into the Contract with the Contracting Authority.
Minimum Qualifying Threshold (MQT)	The minimum score in evaluation which Candidates must achieve in a particular criterion. Failure to achieve this minimum score will result in a Candidate's elimination from the Procurement Process.
National Shared Care Record (NSCR)	A consolidated electronic health record that enables seamless sharing of patient/service user information across multiple healthcare providers and care settings, allowing authorised clinicians to access relevant patient/service user data regardless of where care was delivered.
Official Journal of the European Union (OJEU)	The publication in which all contracts from the public sector that are valued above a certain threshold must be published.
One Health Record (OHR)	An integrated electronic health record that consolidates patient information from all care settings into a single unified view enabling coordinated and person-centred care across the entire healthcare system.

Other Entity	An entity upon whose resources a Candidate relies on to demonstrate economic and financial standing or technical and professional ability.
Pass/Fail Questions	Criteria for which the Submission will be evaluated as either meeting or not meeting the minimum standards. Failure to meet the relevant minimum standards will result in the Candidate's elimination from the Procurement Process.
Privacy and Security	Legal and technical measures to protect patient/service user data in compliance with GDPR and related legislation.
Procurement Documents	The collective set of documents issued by the Contracting Authority at the start of the Procurement Process, including the RTP, the Response Document (Parts 1, 2, 3 and 4), the ESPD template, and other related documents as more particularly described in Section A.
Procurement Evaluation Group (PEG)	The group responsible for evaluating Candidates' Submissions.
Procurement Process	The Restricted Procedure that is being conducted by the Contracting Authority.
Procurement Regulations	EU Directive 2014/24: EU Procurement Directive (as amended by Directive 2014/25/EU).
Project Reference	One of the 3 project references required to be provided in Section B of the Part 3 of the Response Document under the Technical and Professional criteria.
Request for Tender (RFT)	The formal invitation document issued by the Contracting Authority to shortlisted Candidates to submit detailed tenders for the Services during the Tender Stage of the Procurement Process.
Request to Participate (RTP)	The document inviting Candidates to participate in the Shortlisting Stage.
Response Document	The document to be completed by Candidates to provide information for evaluation.

Restricted Procedure	A competitive procurement procedure under Article 26 of Directive 2014/24/EU and Regulation 26 of the Procurement Regulations.
Scored Questions	The questions (criteria) set out in Part 3 of the Response Document which will be used to rank Candidates based on their Submission.
Service User	An individual receiving health and social care services from the HSE in Community settings (including mental health, disability, and community care), uniquely identified by a Service User ID.
Services	The Services as more particularly described in the Appendix 2.
Shortlisting Stage	The stage in the Restricted Procedure commencing with the publication of the Request for Proposals (RTP), during which Candidates' Submissions are evaluated and ranked against pre-defined qualification criteria to determine who will progress to the Tender Stage of the Procurement Process.
Standstill Period	The mandatory 14 days waiting period between notification of the award decision and contract signature, during which unsuccessful Candidates may lodge appeals or challenges in accordance with the Procurement Regulations.
Subcontractor	An entity contracted by the main contractor to perform specific tasks or services within the scope of the Contract.
Submission	The set of documents, including all parts of the Response Document, and including the supporting documentation requested.
Submission Deadline	The final time and date deadline for receipt of Candidates' Submissions on eTenders.
Tender	A formal offer by a Tenderer to provide the Services, submitted in response to the RFT.
Tender Stage	The second stage of the Restricted Procedure following the Shortlisting Stage, during which shortlisted Candidates submit detailed competitive

	bids in response to the Invitation to Tender (RFT) and are evaluated against published technical and financial criteria.
Tenderer	A Candidate shortlisted by the Contracting Authority following evaluation of Submissions and who is invited to participate in the Tender Stage and submit a Tender for the Contract.

Appendix 2 – Detailed Scope of Services

The service requirements outlined in this Appendix are not definitive and may be superseded by further documents provided later in the Procurement Process. They are included to provide Candidates with a high-level overview and understanding of the likely service requirements and will inform how the HSE will determine whether a Project Reference is similar in size, scale, scope and complexity.

The requirements for the EiPaaS system are set out below at a high level. What is set out below should be understood by the Candidate as the minimum viable solution that could be accepted by the HSE. More detailed requirements and standards will be communicated to qualifying Candidates as part of the Tender Phase of this procurement. The below requirements should not be understood by the Candidate as a definitive or final list of requirements, and these requirements will be superseded by any published later in the procurement process.

For the purposes of this document, and this document only, the requirements for the EiPaaS system can be divided into eleven generalised categories listed hereunder:

1. Integration;
2. Service Integrity and Recoverability;
3. Scalability & Availability;
4. Security & Compliance;
5. Observability & Reporting;
6. Implementation;
7. Training;
8. Support & SLAs;
9. Artificial Intelligence
10. Vendor Hosting & Delivery Model
11. Data Management

These categories have been created to allow the Candidate to more readily identify the scope and complexity of the project and to ensure that their selected Project References are of a similar size, scope and complexity to the EiPaaS platform required by the HSE.

Category 1: Integration

Requirement	Description
Functionality, usability & orchestration	The solution must be a centralized EiPaaS interoperability hub capable of managing the full end-to-end lifecycle for all current and future integration contexts. This solution must be supported by a comprehensive Solution Architecture Document (incorporating both high-level and low-level designs. The documentation shall include detailed logical and physical diagrams covering network topology, hybrid hosting (Cloud/On-Prem), and data flow orchestration to ensure seamless integration with HSE enterprise systems and third-party vendors. The platform shall support multi-step orchestration workflows including conditional routing, parallel processing, and state management for long-running processes.
Integration	The solution must facilitate seamless, bi-directional integration with national health systems through native support for consuming and exposing RESTful APIs and SOAP web services to enable secure, real-time integrations. The solution shall support modern service bus and messaging architectures, including integration with enterprise messaging platforms such as Azure Service Bus, to enable reliable message exchange, asynchronous processing, event-driven integration, and loosely coupled communication between clinical, administrative, and enterprise systems.
API Lifecycle/FHIR API Management	The solution must provide an API Manager to handle the entire application programming interface (API) life cycle including FHIR APIs versions including STU3, R4 and future versions. The solution is to include messaging based integration - particularly HL7v2, HL7 v3 and HL7 FHIR, EDIFACT, ebXML and DICOM and shall support HL7 FHIR (minimum R4) for validation, transformation, routing, and exposure of FHIR APIs, including support for profiles, extensions, and Capability Statement publication.
Normalisation of identifiers	The solution should provide tools to de-duplicate and normalise patient data across a variety of different data sources, and the solution must be able to assure that Patient or Personal Health Information is not inappropriately collected or aggregated.
Interoperability	The solution must be capable of interoperating securely with third party systems internally and externally. The solution must provide an API Manager to handle the entire application

	programming interface (API) life cycle including FHIR APIs versions including STU3, R4 and future versions. The platform shall support document-based interoperability patterns for clinical document exchange, including publish, query, retrieve, and metadata handling.
Queue Management	The solution must provide comprehensive management capabilities for messages, queues and event streams. It shall support the viewing, searching, filtering and monitoring of messages across queues and event streams, together with comprehensive observability of messaging operations. The solution shall provide configurable message retention and durability, support persistent messaging, enable the replay and reprocessing of messages where appropriate, and maintain data integrity in the event of processing or infrastructure failures. GUI-based management capabilities are desirable for operational monitoring and administration; however, all messaging resources, including queues, topics, subscriptions and event streams, must also be manageable through secure APIs and Configuration-as-Code mechanisms to support automated deployment, GitOps practices and enterprise-scale operations
Interface Management	The solution must provide a modern environment for the development, testing, deployment and management of interfaces and APIs. It shall support reusable, modular integration components, including the ability to clone, version and manage complete interfaces and individual components. The solution must support the configuration of inbound and outbound connectors, message transformation, mapping, validation, routing and enrichment across supported formats and protocols. GUI-based development, including drag-and-drop mapping, is desirable; however, all interfaces, APIs and integration artefacts must also be manageable through APIs and Configuration-as-Code mechanisms to support Git-based source control, CI/CD and GitOps practices

Category 2: Service Integrity and Recoverability

Requirement	Description
The implemented solution must provide a comprehensive HA/DR and	The vendor must provide a comprehensive HA/DR and Business Continuity Plan for both cloud and on-premises deployments, detailing a fault-tolerant design with fully automated DR orchestration (e.g., load balancer health checks and multi-zone/multi-region clustering) to ensure near-

Business Continuity Plan	instantaneous failover and uninterrupted integration flows without manual intervention. This specification must include a detailed description of the redundant architecture, guaranteed bandwidth allocation, maximum latency thresholds, and technical procedures for data synchronization and service restoration across different failure scenarios, alongside strict commitments and defined metrics for Recovery Time Objectives (RTO) and Recovery Point Objectives (RPO).
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Category 3: Scalability & Availability

Requirement	Description
The implemented solution must support national-scale volumes and be scalable	The platform shall support national-scale transaction volumes and high availability consistent with critical healthcare infrastructure. It must be scalable with tools for stress or load testing and must allow for increases in capacity to meet growth in usage and transactional demands with the ability to integrate new interfaces onto the application.
The solution must be capable of high availability	The solution must be designed in a fashion to allow delivery of high availability aligned to agreed service needs, excluding planned downtime, allowing for fail over, both manual and automatic, between nodes, in the event of a fault and/or planned/unplanned activities. The solution must allow for the ability to seamlessly transfer/configure installations should there be a requirement to switch hosting environments.

Category 4: Security & Compliance

Requirement	Description
The solution must provide mechanisms for Identity and Access Management	The solution must provide mechanisms for Identity and Access Management (IAM), including support for Single Sign-On (SSO), Multi-Factor Authentication (MFA), and Role-Based Access Control (RBAC) to ensure secure, auditable user and system accessibility. The platform shall enforce MFA for all privileged users and support configurable MFA for all users. The platform shall provide reporting on access to sensitive data (payload inspection, export, admin actions). Vendors must describe the responsibility and ownership model for IAM, networking, certificates, backups, monitoring, patching, logging, incident response, keys and operational support.

The solution must provide message security	The solution must provide messaging security e.g. prevention of malicious interference for all message types.
The platform will support central governance, and the governance will be clearly documented	The platform shall support central governance with delegated administration for multiple organisations/partners while maintaining enforceable guardrails. The platform shall have a documented security governance model (roles, responsibilities, decision rights) covering Supplier and HSE, including a shared-responsibility model for any managed components. The platform shall support centrally managed security policies (authN/Z, crypto, logging, retention, egress controls) enforceable at design-time and runtime.
Security will be measured	The Supplier shall provide security KPIs/KRIs (e.g., vulnerability remediation timelines, security incident MTTR, key rotation compliance, failed login anomalies).
The platform should provide API security and validation	The platform shall provide centrally governed API security policies that can be applied consistently across all APIs without requiring modification of the underlying applications. It shall support enterprise-grade capabilities for authentication, authorisation, request validation, traffic management, threat protection, auditing and compliance monitoring throughout the API lifecycle. Security policies shall be centrally managed, version controlled and support automated deployment and governance through modern DevSecOps practices.

Category 5: Observability & Reporting

Requirement	Description
The solution should be monitorable, and the monitoring should be available for reporting	The solution shall provide comprehensive monitoring and observability capabilities for integration services, including real-time and historical reporting on platform health, performance, usage and individual integrations. GUI-based dashboards and visualisations are desirable; however, all metrics, logs and traces shall also be accessible through standards-based APIs and export mechanisms without dependency on proprietary dashboards, enabling integration with enterprise monitoring, reporting and observability platforms.
The solution must support auditing capabilities	The solution must provide auditing capabilities; including the ability to track user and interface activity down to a low level e.g. pinpointing who made a specific change to data and when. The platform shall support the export of Audit log data to use in a BI solution.

The solution will have an alerting functionality	The solution shall provide configurable, proactive alerting for platform, integration and interface events, including failures, performance issues and inactivity conditions. It shall support integration with enterprise notification and operational management platforms, including email, messaging, collaboration, ITSM and automation platforms, through standard interfaces and APIs. Alerting shall support configurable routing, escalation and auditability to enable effective operational monitoring and incident management.
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Category 6: Implementation

Requirement	Description
The solution should facilitate comprehensive 'Out of the Box' workflow orchestration mechanisms	The solution should facilitate comprehensive 'Out of the Box' workflow orchestration mechanisms, e.g. ability to run stored procedures, web services etc. to query for or alter data within an extract, insert missing data to segments to sending email notifications etc.
The solution should be configurable by the HSE	The solution shall enable the HSE to configure and administer the platform, including the management of integrations, connectors, protocols, libraries and platform settings. GUI-based administration is desirable; however, all configuration and administration functions shall also be accessible through secure APIs and Configuration-as-Code mechanisms to support version control, automated deployment and GitOps practices. The solution shall support the migration of integrations and configuration artefacts between environments and provide a configurable and extensible user interface where applicable.
The solution must be capable of meeting the HSE's needs for deployment	The solution must support deploying updated integration logic or system-level settings into a live production environment without service interruption or system downtime, and the platform must support multi-instance deployment, allowing multiple independent integrations engines or environments to operate on a single physical or virtual host with strict resource isolation. The vendor must describe the detailed SDLC lifecycle covering Design → Build → Test → Deploy → Operate → Change → Retire, including ownership, approvals and operational handover.

Proof of Concept Implementation	The successful vendor must be capable of implementing a small scale proof of concept to ensure that their solution is fully capable of integrating with HSE systems and services in advance of a full scale implementation.
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Category 7: Training

Requirement	Description
The vendor must provide platform training for all relevant staff (business, developer and operations team) with an option of integration engine accreditation or certification in the relevant technology.	The vendor must provide the necessary training and training materials to onboard, maintain and operate the solution. The training programme shall encompass initial onboarding training, ongoing skills development aligned to new platform releases and version upgrades, and refresh training following major platform changes. The vendor will provide ongoing integration engine training, future solution version features and provide access to training for new participants. The vendor must provide ad-hoc training for the Integration Service Solution to external or internal parties who assume operational or management responsibilities for the integration platform. The vendor training programme should be formally accredited and shall offer an option for participants to achieve recognised certification or accreditation in the relevant integration technology. The vendor training shall be available in multiple delivery formats, including on-site classroom-based instruction and online/remote sessions, to accommodate diverse learner needs and geographic distribution.
The vendor must provide all documentation with rights for distribution within the organisation	The vendor must provide a full copy of user, system and administrative documentation with rights for distribution within the organisation. The vendor should provide training and reference material online and should have an active development community forum.

Category 8: Support & SLAs

Requirement	Description
The solution must provide comprehensive monitoring of all platform components	The solution shall provide comprehensive monitoring of all platform components, including real-time and historical health status, resource utilisation, and interface activity. Monitoring shall be accessible via intuitive GUI-based dashboards with configurable views for overall platform health and individual integration performance.

The solution will support configurable logging and enable log data outputs	The solution shall support configurable logging levels across all platform components, ranging from error-level through to debug-level diagnostics, to facilitate both operational troubleshooting and in-depth technical analysis. The solution shall provide the capability to output statistical and raw structured log data in industry-standard formats suitable for consumption by external analytics, business intelligence, and security information and event management (SIEM) platforms.
The solution will be upgraded and patched on an agreed timeline, with no data loss.	Vendor shall perform all solution upgrades, patches, and version releases within the timeframes defined in the agreed Service Level Agreements. The solution shall support roll-forward and roll-back capabilities for all upgrades, ensuring safe and reversible deployment procedures with zero data loss. The Vendor shall provide backward compatibility support for a minimum of n-2 major versions of the platform and shall ensure that all patches, revisions, and version updates are subject to comprehensive regression testing prior to release.
The vendor will provide a comprehensive support model	The Vendor shall provide a comprehensive support model encompassing 24/7 availability with appropriate access for HSE support teams, tiered support levels including dedicated 3rd-level (L3) support to the implementation and operational teams, and clearly defined escalation pathways.
The vendor will report against agreed SLAs	The Vendor shall deliver regular reporting against agreed Service Level Agreements, including adherence to response times, resolution targets, and availability commitments.

Category 9: Artificial Intelligence

Requirement	Description
The vendor should ensure that the AI usage within the solution is aligned with HSE policies and Irish and EU legislation	The solution must ensure that the AI usage is strictly aligned with HSE AI policies, Irish Data Protection laws, and the EU AI Act, and the solution must support AI governance and ethics which are of the standard required by HSE AI policies and Irish and EU regulation.
The vendor must provide AI skills transfer	The vendor should have a roadmap for skills transfer and change management regarding AI adoption.
AI implemented as part of the	The solution should have the security protocols to protect the AI components and guarantee the resilience of services during any

solution must be robust and clearly delineated.	AI platform outages. The vendor should provide all contractual clauses specific to AI usage, including data ownership rights for model training, indemnity against AI-generated output, and any consumption-based commercial terms (e.g., token-based pricing).
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Category 10: Vendor Hosting & Delivery Model

Requirement	Description
The solution must be delivered as a supplier-operated SaaS or fully managed cloud subscription service	The proposed EiPaaS solution must be delivered as a supplier-operated SaaS or fully managed cloud subscription service. The supplier must be contractually accountable for hosting, infrastructure operation, security patching, platform upgrades, monitoring, backup, disaster recovery, tenant isolation, availability, support, service management, data return, data deletion and exit support.
The supplier must provide a secure, production-grade hybrid connectivity model	The HSE preference is for a fully managed, fully hosted service which must reside within the European Economic Area (EEA). Any vendor proposing supporting solutions which are currently developed, hosted, supported or backed up in a country covered by an EU adequacy decision (example UK) must provide the HSE with details of how the vendor will continue to process all HSE personal data within the EEA or a country outside the EEA covered by an EU adequacy decision, in the event that the country loses its EU adequacy decision. The service may reside on a Cloud Platform - public Cloud or vendor's own Cloud, in which case the HSE requirement is a Cloud Native application, ideally SaaS but at a minimum PaaS. It should be noted that the HSE hosting preference will be strongly influenced by clinical requirements. The supplier must provide a secure, production-grade hybrid connectivity model for NHN/on-prem data sources, supporting private connectivity and/or an outbound-only on-premises runtime/agent model, with no requirement to expose NHN systems directly to the public internet.

Category 11: Data Management

Requirement	Description
The solution must support standards-based metadata management and interoperability	The platform must support standards-based metadata management and interoperability for health datasets, including the ability to create, validate, version, export and exchange machine-readable metadata aligned to applicable catalogue and interoperability standards, including HealthDCAT-AP or equivalent profiles where required, and to integrate with external catalogue, governance or publication services through standards-based APIs and validation mechanisms.
The platform must support semantic interoperability and data standardisation	The platform must support semantic interoperability and data standardisation through integration with terminology services, controlled vocabularies, reference data, code systems, value sets, canonical data definitions and mapping services, and must enable validation, transformation and enrichment of data using governed semantic assets that can be updated over time without material re-engineering of integration logic, including support for versioning, backward compatibility, and controlled evolution of semantic artefacts (terminologies, mappings, canonical definitions).
The platform must support governed preparation of data for secondary-use, analytics and dataset publication scenarios	The platform must support governed preparation of data for secondary-use, analytics and dataset publication scenarios, including the capture and preservation of provenance, lineage, transformation history, quality indicators, review status and auditability, and must support controlled orchestration of de-identification, pseudonymisation, enrichment, packaging and export processes in accordance with applicable policy, legal and governance requirements.

Appendix 3 – HSE Cyber Security Baseline Requirements

The HSE Cyber Security Baseline Requirements Checklist is included in a separate document published with this RTP. Candidates must complete and return this checklist with their submission. Failure to complete this checklist in full will result in exclusion of the Candidate from this procurement process.