Comhairle Contae
Laoise | Laois
County Council

OPEN PROCEDURE

REQUEST FOR TENDER

SINGLE-OPERATOR FRAMEWORK AGREEMENT

Scope of Framework	
Supply on Lease Hire with Maintenance of 2,200 kg−4,250 kg GVW Battery Electric Vehicles (BEV) Panel Vans	
Procedure	
Open Procedure	
Key Dates	
Issue Date	**Tuesday 24 November 2026**
Closing Date for Queries	**Tuesday 15 December 2026** at **12:00** (Irish time)
Closing Date for Tender Submissions	**22 December 2026** at **12:00** (Irish time)
Contact for Queries	
Via www.etenders.gov.ie only	
Format for submission of tenders – use the Tender Response Document	
Via www.etenders.gov.ie only	

Please note that information relating to this Request for Tender, including clarifications and changes, will be published on the Irish Government Procurement Opportunities Portal *www.etenders.gov.ie*. Registration is free of charge and there is no charge for documents.

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

This Invitation to Tender shall be interpreted in a manner consistent with Irish and EU rules on public procurement.

1. ABOUT THE CONTRACTING AUTHORITY

1.1 The Contracting Authority

Laois County Council is responsible for the social, economic, infrastructural and cultural development of the County. The range of services provided by Laois County Council could best be summarised by listing the programme group structure used by central government to classify the activities of all local authorities as follows:

- Housing & Building
- Road Transportation & Safety
- Development Incentives & Controls
- Environmental Protection
- Recreation & Amenity
- Education, Health & Welfare
- Miscellaneous Services

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

1.2 Small and Medium Enterprise Participation

It is the policy of the Contracting Authority to promote participation by Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) on a fair and equal basis.

SMEs are encouraged to explore the possibilities of forming relationships with other SMEs or with larger enterprises to meet the financial, economic or technical capacity requirements of the competition, if required.

Tenderers may include individuals, partnerships, limited companies, groupings or any combination of the foregoing with or without legal personality. However, a grouping if successful will be required to establish legal personality to enter the framework agreement / contract.

Tenderers are reminded that they may rely on the resources of other entities to establish the requirements on condition that they can prove to the satisfaction of the Contracting Authority that they will have these resources at their disposal when necessary.

If the tender is from a consortium / joint venture, tenderers must ensure that all the relevant information is provided and where necessary, provide the information requested separately for each party. Relevant information relates to where a tenderer is relying on the resources to qualify (e.g. turnover, manpower, previous experience) and/or to deliver contracts. The consortium must appoint a single point of contact who will assume overall responsibility for delivery, and who is authorised to sign the framework agreement / contract on behalf of all consortia members. The Contracting Authority will not act as an arbitrator between members of consortia.

2. SCOPE OF THE FRAMEWORK AGREEMENT

2.1 Type of Framework

This competition relates to a

Single-Operator Framework with substitution list
Established with one economic operator, thereafter that economic operator being entitled to be considered for all contracts within the scope of the framework. Where the first placed framework tenderer cannot fulfil the requirements of the tender, the local authority may move to the next placed framework participant (substitute list)

2.2 Scope of Requirements under the Framework

Details of Initial Contract
Laois County Council proposes to establish a Single operator framework agreement (with Substitution list) for (five) 5 years for the supply on lease hire with maintenance of the following vehicles:

Lot No.	Description of Lot	Estimated Quantity	Duration of Lease (Years)
16	**Small Electric Panel Van (SWB)**, 2,400 kg GVM, Cargo Volume **2.9 m³**, Payload >560 kg	5	5
17	**Small Electric Panel Van (LWB)**, 2,400 kg GVM, Cargo Volume **2.9 m³**, Payload >560 kg	5	5
18	**Medium Electric Panel Van (SWB – Low Roof)**, 3,200 kg GVM, Cargo Volume 5.8 m³, Payload >850 kg	10	5
19	**Medium Electric Panel Van (LWB – Low Roof)**, 3,200 kg GVM, Cargo Volume 6.8 m³, Payload >850 kg	10	5
20	**Large Electric Panel Van** (LWB, Medium Roof), 4,250 kg GVM, Cargo Volume 11.0 m³, Payload 1,000 kg	5	5

The estimated value of the framework is €10,000,000. For the avoidance of all doubt, the framework period will be for Five (5) years, vehicle contracts may be awarded which extend beyond the lifetime of the Framework.

Tenders may be submitted for one or more lots. A separate Tender Response Document (TRD) must be completed for each Lot being applied for. Please note that no guarantee whatsoever can be given as to the precise number of vehicles which will be required.

The requirement is an estimate and is not binding on Laois County Council and the actual number of vehicles ordered may be higher or lower than that stated above.

Tenders will be evaluated on foot of the initial open competition to form a single party framework agreement (with substitution list) between Laois County Council and the successful tenderer.

Contracts for the initial requirements will be awarded on foot of this competition

If during the lifetime of the Framework a consistent requirement arises for a light a Chassis Cab van vehicle other than those specifically described the Lots above, procurement will be sought from the successful tenderer of the Lot with most similar vehicle.

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Details of additional contracts under the Framework

There is no guarantee of additional contracts, but where they arise, the Contracting Authority will consult the 1st placed member of the framework agreement in accordance with the rules of operation outlined in this Request for Tender.

2.3 Detailed Specification of Requirements

Please see Appendix 1, **Specification of Lease Hire Requirements and Vehicle Requirements for each individual**

Submissions will be evaluated qualitatively based on the information provided in response to Appendix 1.

Failure to achieve a minimum of 70% in the Fitness for Purpose Award Criteria will result in elimination from the competition..

2.4 Contract Management

The Contracting Authority requires tenderers to nominate a dedicated contract manager who will act as the main point of contact for the duration of the framework. This person shall have

the authority to deal with all matters in relation to contracts and be responsible for the satisfactory delivery of the supplies/services required. The duties of the contract manager will include the following:

- Overall responsibility for a good working relationship with the Contracting Authority;
- Provide regular reports on performance as agreed with the Contracting Authority;
- Meet as and when required to review and examine performance;
- Deal with disputes, complaints or concerns that cannot be adequately resolved;
- Proactively discuss with the Contracting Authority ways of improving efficiency regarding service delivery in general and providing suggestions for improvement and cost savings.
- Provide the Contracting Authority with access to a live online platform visibility of service and maintenance records for all leased vehicles.

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

2.5 Anticipated Timeline

The following indicative timeline is envisaged for this procurement:

Issue RFT	**Tuesday 24 November 2026**
Closing date for Queries	**Tuesday 15 December 2026** at **12:00** (Irish time)
Closing date for Receipt of Tenders	**22 December 2026** at **12:00** (Irish time)
Clarification / verification meetings (if anticipated)	N/A
Award decision	Q1 2027
Framework Agreement Commencement	Q1 2027

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

3. ESTABLISHMENT AND OPERATION OF THE FRAMEWORK

The Contracting Authority proposes to engage in a competitive process for the establishment of a framework agreement (with substitution list). A framework agreement constitutes a means of establishing overall terms and conditions in accordance with which, for a specified duration, individual contracts may or may not be awarded.

3.1 Numbers Admitted to the Framework Agreement

The framework agreement will be established as a single-operator framework agreement (with substitution list) with the tenderer selected following the tender stage and the application of the award criteria. a

3.2 Duration of the Framework Agreement

The framework agreement will be for a period of Five (5) years.

The Contracting Authority confirms that the period of any contracts awarded under the framework agreement may extend beyond the date of expiry of the agreement.

3.3 Estimated Value of the Framework Agreement

It is envisaged that maximum spend under this framework agreement will not exceed

Five (5) Million Euro excluding VAT

It is emphasised, however, that this figure is provided strictly for indicative purposes only as there is no guaranteed expenditure under the framework agreement.

3.4 Awarding Contracts under the Framework Agreement

In the case of a single-operator framework agreement (with substitution list), contracts may be awarded directly on foot of the original tenders or by consultation with the Framework Members and invitation to provide a supplementary tender within the constraints laid down in this tender documentation and the framework agreement terms and conditions.

If during the lifetime of the Framework a consistent requirement arises for a light a Chassis Cab van vehicle other than those specifically described the Lots above, procurement will be sought from the successful tenderer of the Lot with most similar vehicle.

Where the first placed tenderer cannot fufil the needs of the tender or provide all of the required vehicles, the local authority will move to second placed tenderer and so on.

3.5 Right to Tender outside of the Framework

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

3.6 Compliance with the Terms and Conditions of the Framework Agreement

Admission to the framework agreement will be conditional upon acceptance of the Contracting Authority's Framework Terms and Conditions in Appendix 2 .

Tenderers are required to review these terms and conditions and indicate their acceptance thereof as part of their tender submission.

In addition to the Framework Terms and Conditions, Tenderers are required to read the General Terms and Conditions for Supplies 2017 and indicate their acceptance thereof as part of their tender submission.

3.7 Award to Runner Up

If for any reason, it is not possible to establish the framework agreement or award the initial contract to the designated successful tenderer emerging from this competitive process; or if having awarded a contract, the successful tenderer fails to deliver the contract in accordance with the terms and conditions, the Contracting Authority reserves the right to establish the framework with the next highest scoring tenderer based on the terms advertised at any time during the tender validity period of twelve (12) months. This shall be without prejudice to the right of the Contracting Authority to cancel this competitive process and/or initiate a new contract award procedure at its sole discretion.

3.8 Pricing

Prices quoted shall remain firm for the duration of the framework.

Thereafter quoted prices will only be considered for review in consultation with appointed Laois County Council personnel, any increases will not exceed inflation as per CPI.

All prices quoted must be inclusive of all charges for packaging, packing, loading, unloading, shipping, carriage, insurance and delivery of the Goods to the Delivery Address and any duties, taxes or levies other than VAT.

All prices quoted to be exclusive of VAT.

The lowest cost valid tender will receive the maximum score achievable under the heading Ultimate Cost Score. The methodology for calculating Ultimate Cost Score is outlined in Section 5.1.

3.9 Invoicing

Invoices shall be submitted by the successful tenderer on a monthly basis for all costs incurred in the preceding month. All official invoices must quote a Laois County Council purchase order number. All invoices which do not quote the relevant order number(s) will be returned to the supplier unpaid. In accordance with Circular 1/2013 issued by the Department of Finance, all payments to supplies will be by EFT

Detailed invoicing arrangements will be agreed with the successful tenderer.

3.10 Review of Supplier Performance

The successful tenderer will be appointed for a probationary period of six (6) months, during that time the supplier will be assessed based on various relevant criteria. At the end of the six (6) months probationary period, the contract will either be allowed to continue if performance has been satisfactory, or terminated if it has not and supplier shortcomings cannot be addressed.

In the event that the contract is continued, the contract will be subject to a further official review every six (6) months thereafter and will only be continued subject to satisfactory performance.

In the event that the contract is terminated Laois County Council reserves the right to revert to the tenderer who finished in second place (depending on said tenderer demonstrating continued compliance with all stated evaluation criteria) in this competition.

Supplier performance will however be continually monitored over the term of the contract. Quality of service, cost competitiveness, availability of resources and turnaround time will be the main criteria for measuring performance. It is expected that the successful tenderer will take a proactive role in monitoring performance with a view to making appropriate recommendations where necessary.

Fleet Management Services undertake audits of vehicles on site and will report on performance during the lifetime of the contract.

3.11 Termination of Framework / Contract

The Contracting Authority reserves the right at its sole discretion to terminate any contract where, due to matters outside its control, including but not limited to, increased costs arising from any changes in the Customs Union, which render the commercial arrangement uncompetitive.

4. SELECTION CRITERIA

The Contracting Authority is using the **open** procedure for the award of this framework agreement, therefore, while all interested parties may submit a tender, only those demonstrating that they have the required level of financial and technical capacity will have their tender considered. In order to demonstrate a tenderers' qualifications, tenderers are required to provide the information set out below in the Tender Response Document (TRD) which is based on a self-declaration model, however tenderers are required to provide the minimum information required.

Alternatively, tenderers may have compiled a European Single Procurement Document (ESPD) which will be accepted as evidence of compliance with Section 4.2

4.1 Relying on the Standing of Other Entities

Tenderers are reminded that they may rely on the resources of other entities to establish the requirements on condition that they can prove to the satisfaction of the Contracting Authority that they will have these resources at their disposal when necessary.

Please refer to section 1.2 for further details.

4.2 General, Legal and Financial Requirements

Tenderers are required to provide information on the following in the Tender Response Document. The criteria and rules outlined below are assessed on a pass/fail basis. Failure to comply with the requirements will result in the tender being considered inadmissible.

General Information
Provide contact and general information on the tendering organisation - company name, address and contact details for individual responsible for this tender and company overview as well as information on sub-contractors and consortium members if applicable.
Declarations
Tenderers must complete, sign and date the Declaration relating to the following contained in the Tender Response Document. This must be completed by each group member. Tenderers may be excluded from participation based on the responses made in the Declaration. The Contracting Authority reserves the right at its discretion to exclude a non-compliant Tenderer under each heading. • Declaration of Bona Fides as per Article 57 of Directive 2014/24/EU as implemented by SI 284 of May 2016. • Declaration regarding compliance with relevant Statutory Obligations. Where tenderers are established and operating outside of Ireland compliance with equivalent legislation as applicable in the country of establishment / operation is required. • Article 5k Declaration regarding EU Regulation 2022/576 on restrictive measures in the Context of Russian Actions in the Ukraine.

Financial		
Tax	Confirmation that the tenderer / all parties associated with the tenderer are fully tax compliant in accordance with the rules of the Irish Revenue Commissioners.	
Turnover	Confirmation that the tendering party turnover exceeded the amount shown below for each of the Lots during one of the last three years	
	Lot	**Turnover**
	16-20	€200,000.00
Insurance	Or pro-rata if more recently established firms are tendering – however the firm must have been in existence for at least 6 months. Confirmation of the following insurances being in place: • Employer's Liability - €13 million • Public Liability - €6.5 million • Product Liability - € 6.5 million • Professional Indemnity - € N/A • Environmental Liability Impairment (EIL) (where there is a risk of gradual pollution or contamination) - € N/A • Cyber Liability - € N/ A **Insurances provided by vendors must be authorised for this jurisdiction** • **Insurances provided by vendors must include a notation of an Indemnity to Principals clause or otherwise for the Council to be specifically indemnified.**	

4.3 Technical Capacity Requirements

Tenderers are required to provide information on the following in the Tender Response Document. The criteria and rules outlined below are assessed on a pass/fail basis. Failure to comply with the requirements will result in the tender being considered inadmissible.

Manpower Levels	
Tenderers must provide information which demonstrates access to the minimum number of skilled personnel as indicated below and outlined in the TRD.	
Skillset Required	**Minimum Number Required**
Must submit a statement showing details of organisational structure, current manpower levels and skill base.	One Workshop Manager Two (2)LCV Fitters
Technical Resources	
Tenderers must provide information which demonstrates access to the required level of technical resources as indicated below and outlined in the TRD.	
Technical Resource Required	**Minimum Requirement**
Must submit a statement showing details of technical resources available including a vehicle workshop and equipment capable of maintaining and repairing 2,200 kg to 4,250 kg Panel Vans described in this tender –Battery Electric Vehicles– and a mobile workshop to carry out Depot based/roadside repairs on same.	Provision of a vehicle workshop with the capacity to repair and maintain a minimum of four (4) 2,200 kg – 4,250 kg BEV Panel Van Vehicles described in this tender simultaneously and the provision of a mobile workshop suitable for depot

	based/roadside maintenance and repair of such vehicles. Please complete and return Appendix 3, Workshop Self Audit Form.
Previous Contracts / Experience	
Tenderers must provide information clearly demonstrating successful delivery of at least two (2) previous comparable contracts / experience, involving the following features:	
Must submit details of successful delivery of at least two similar type contracts of a similar size and scale undertaken in the last three years by the Tenderer. As far as is reasonably practicable these details should include a description of the contract in question, the value of the contract, the number of vehicles involved, the precise services supplied and how the contract is managed. In assessing the contracts submitted Laois County Council will assess the type of contract submitted, the mixture of work carried out and the volume of work. Please complete the TRD.	
Health & Safety	
Tenderers must provide information which demonstrates operation of health & safety systems and procedures in line with all relevant Safety Health & Welfare at Work legislation. Please complete the TRD. Evidence of compliance will be required as condition of contract award.	
Quality Assurance	
Tenderers must provide information which demonstrates a commitment to quality assurance and provide details of quality assurance policies and systems and whether 3rd party certified. Please complete the TRD.	
Environmental Management System	
Tenderers must provide information which demonstrates operation of an appropriate environmental management system whether 3rd party certified or in-house. Please complete the TRD	

5. AWARD CRITERIA

Only tenders which meet the Selection Criteria and are confirmed as valid and responsive to the specifications set out in this document will be evaluated against the award criteria. Tenderers should ensure that they have submitted sufficient relevant information to allow their tenders to be assessed under each of the award criteria set out below.

The framework will be awarded on the basis of the most economically advantageous compliant tender taking into account the following award criteria and weightings.

Criterion A	**Weighting**	**Maximum Marks**	Minimum Marks – 70%
	30 %	3000	2100
Title	**Fitness for purpose** of the Product/Service offered		
Description	Tenderers must provide sufficient information to enable Laois County Council to assess their offer under this criterion including Tenderer's conformity with Appendix 1 of the tender specification. See Appendix 1, first paragraph for a detailed explanation of what is required. Tenderers may be awarded more marks if their submission exceeds requirements in a way that is considered more beneficial to Laois County Council.		
Criterion B	**Weighting**	**Maximum Marks**	**Minimum Marks**
	10%	1000	700
Title	**Details on Lease Hire with Maintenance**		
Description	Tenderers must provide detailed information to enable Laois County Council to assess their offer under this criterion. Marks are awarded for this criteria based on the information provided in response to the requirements in Appendix 1, Section 1 Lease Hire Requirements *additional* to tacit compliance. For example – details on the tenderer's approach to minimizing vehicle downtime and the consistent provision of replacement vehicles in instances when vehicles are off the road. Specific details provided will form part of any contracts awarded.		

Criterion C	Weighting	Maximum Marks	Minimum Marks
	10%	1000	N/A
Title	**Delivery Schedule** offered		
Description	Tenderers must provide sufficient information to enable Laois County Council to assess their offer under this criterion including stating delivery lead time in weeks on the tender form (delivery time in weeks from date of order). See Appendix 1, Section 3 for a detailed explanation. The delivery time should not exceed 26 weeks from date of order. For delivery, tenders will be scored in inverse proportion to the maximum score, which will be allocated to the tender with the shortest delivery time in weeks.		
Criterion D	**Weighting**	**Maximum Marks**	**Minimum Marks**
	4 %	400	N/A
Title	**Warranty**		
Description	Tenderers must provide sufficient information to enable Laois County Council to assess their offer under this criterion including the warranty period from the date of delivery and the scope of the warranty. As a minimum five (5) year warranty on the vehicle is required. See Appendix 1, Section 2.4 for a detailed explanation. For warranty, tenders will be scored in inverse proportion to the maximum score, which will be allocated to the tender with the longest warranty in years.		
Criterion E	**Weighting**	**Maximum Marks**	**Minimum Marks**
	3%	300	N/A
Title	Excess Kilometres		
Description	Tenderers must provide sufficient information to enable Laois County Council to assess their offer under this criterion. See Appendix 1, Section 1.2. For Excess Kilometre penalties, tenders with no excess kilometre penalties will receive maximum marks.		

Criterion F	Weighting	Maximum Marks	Minimum Marks
	3%	300	N/A
Title	Early Termination Charges		
Description	Tenderers must provide sufficient information to enable Laois County Council to assess their offer under this criterion. See Appendix 1, Section 1.3. For early termination charges, tenders with no early termination charge will receive maximum marks.		
Criterion G	**Weighting**	**Maximum Marks**	**Minimum Marks**
	40%	4000	N/A
Title	Ultimate Cost		
Description	Total lease hire cost per month per vehicle and hourly labour rate. Tenderers must complete the Form of Tender in full in the TRD in relation to this criterion. Failure to complete the Form of Tender in full will result in elimination from the competition.		

NOTE 1: Tenderers should note that they must achieve a minimum rating of **70** % for criteria **A** in order to avoid elimination from the competition. Please note that in relation to criterion **G** – Cost Criterion , tenders will be scored in inverse proportion to the maximum score, which will be allocated to the lowest cost valid tender not previously eliminated on qualitative grounds. Assessment will be based on a notional quantity over the duration of the framework. Strategic pricing on specific items will not be excepted.

NOTE 2: Tenderers should ensure in their tenders that they provide detailed information in respect of all aspects of the contract award criteria as stated above. This will enable the awarding authority to assess fully the extent of their offers.

NOTE 3: Tie-Break Rules: MEAT Assessment
In the event that there are two or more highest ranked Tenderers that obtain the same total marks (i.e. a tie for the highest ranked Tenderer) OR there is a tie for any place on the framework agreement the following tie-break rules will be adopted:

The Tenderer who has been awarded the highest marks for the total qualitative assessment (i.e. non-cost related element) of their Tender will be deemed to be the most economically advantageous tender ("MEAT").

In the event the Tenderers receive the same marks for the qualitative assessment of their Tender, the Tenderer who has been awarded the highest marks for "***A***. Fitness for Purpose of the Product/Services Offered " will be deemed the MEAT.

In the event of the application of this tie-break rule not resulting in the determination of a MEAT, this approach will continue to be applied to each of the award criteria in the descending order listed in below until such time as a MEAT can be determined:

Order of Tie Break Evaluation Criteria*:
1. **B.** Details on Lease Hire with Maintenance
2. **C.** Delivery Schedule
3. **E.** Excess Kilometres
4. **F.** Early Termination Charges
5. **G.** Cost

In the unlikely event of the rules set out above failing to determine a MEAT, the preferred Tenderer shall be selected on the basis of random selection. In such a circumstance, representatives of each Tenderer that achieved the same highest marks are invited to observe the random selection and Tenderers will be notified in advance of the time/date and location of the random selection procedure.

NOTE 4: Tie-Break Rules: Ranking

The Framework Agreement will result in a ranking system where the highest scoring tenderer by reference to the award criteria set out at Section 5 will be ranked number 1, the second highest scoring tenderer by reference to the award criteria will be ranked number 2, etc.

In the event that there is a tie for any position on the Framework Agreement other than last place, the Tenderer who has been awarded the highest marks for total Qualitative Award of their Tender will be deemed to be the higher ranked tender for the purposes of framework ranking.

In the event the Tenderers receive the same marks for the Qualitative assessment of their tender, the Tie-Break rules will proceed as per above **Note 3: Tie-Break Rules: MEAT Assessment**.

5.1 Methodology for Calculating the Cost Score

The following formula will be applied to the cost score:

The lowest cost tender that also meets all the minimum requirements of the qualitative award criteria will receive the maximum score achievable under this criterion. The scores of the other valid tenders will be calculated using the following formula:

Lowest Cost from a Bona Fide Tender	A
Cost for the tender being evaluated	**B**
Maximum Points available for Cost	4000
Formula employed	$\frac{4000}{\mathbf{B}} \times \mathbf{A}$

5.2 Methodology for Calculating Scoring of Qualitative Criteria

Score	Meaning	Interpretation
90 – 100%	Outstanding	A very comprehensive response demonstrating extensive understanding offering full assurance to client – fully supported with no reservations.
80 – 89%	Excellent	An excellent response demonstrating excellent understanding offering assurance to client – strongly supported.
70 – 79%	Very good	A very good response demonstrating very good understanding offering assurance to client – fully supported.
Less than 70 % is unacceptable		

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

5.3 Clarification / Verification Meetings

Award of contract/membership of the framework agreement may be subject to attendance at a clarification and verification meeting. It would be essential that the key personnel assigned to this contract should be available and present at this meeting. If required, tenderers will be notified of the date, time, agenda and format for such meetings as soon as possible.

A visit to the tenderer's premises may be required to clarify any questions or queries regarding the tender offer.

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

Refer to note re alternative meeting arrangements in Instructions to Tenderers section below.

5.4 Clarification of Abnormally Low Tenders

If the Contracting Authority considers the tender submission to be commercially unsustainable or otherwise problematic in light of the tendered price or any other financial matter (including proposed indicative hours), the tenderer shall be invited to provide clarification to the Contracting Authority in respect of all elements of the tender submission that the Contracting Authority deems relevant. Any failure to satisfactorily comply with such a request, or to satisfactorily address the Contracting Authority's concerns, may, at the discretion of the Contracting Authority, result in the elimination of the tender in question on the basis of it being considered abnormally low.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR TENDERERS

(a) Sufficiency & Accuracy of Tender

Tenderers will be deemed to have examined all the documents enclosed 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 tender.

(b) Tender Documents – Ambiguity, Discrepancy, Error, Omission

Where tenderers consider that they are missing any documents which would prevent the submission of a comprehensive tender please contact Laois County Council via the messaging facility on www.etenders.gov.ie as soon as possible.

Tenderers are required to inform Laois County Council of any ambiguity, discrepancy or error in the Tender Documents. Laois County Council shall, upon receipt of such notification, notify all Tenderers of its ruling in respect of any such ambiguity, discrepancy, error or omission. Such ruling shall be issued in writing and shall form part of the Invitation to Tender.

(c) Submission of Tenders via www.etenders.gov.ie

Tenders must be submitted electronically via the eTenders electronic tender facility on www.etenders.gov.ie only. Only Tenders submitted through the electronic tender facility will be accepted. Tenders submitted by any other means (including but not limited to by email, post or hand delivery) will not be accepted.

Please note that the eTenders electronic tender facility closes at the stated date and time precisely. It is the responsibility of Applicants / Tenderers to use the tender facility correctly, which includes taking responsibility for the safe and timely delivery of the tender.

Tenderers must ensure that they give themselves enough time to upload and submit all required documentation before the closing date/time. Tenderers should consider the fact that upload speeds vary. In order to submit a response to the electronic tender facility, please note that you must ensure you have submitted the response completely. It is advisable to familiarise yourself with the new eTenders platform prior to the closing date.

The Contracting Authority will not be responsible if an economic operator fails to upload their documentation or if the uploaded file(s) is/are corrupted and cannot be read by Laois County Council.

In order to facilitate assessment, Applicants / Tenderers are kindly requested to submit a single attachment inclusive of the completed questionnaire(s) / tender(s) and all related appendices for each Lot applied for .

Economic Operators should note the following when making their submission:

- There is a maximum upload limit of 100MB per tender submission.
- After submitting a response, the response may be modified and re-submitted as many times as may be necessary until the CfT deadline has expired.
- The ‘Submit’ button will be disabled automatically upon the expiration of the response deadline.

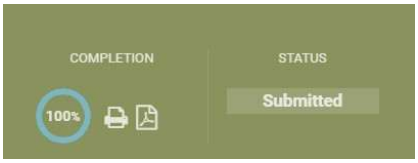
Below we provide an overview of the key steps. Please note that the Contracting Authority take no responsibility for these steps being the totality of the steps required as different processes may require different actions.

Should you experience difficulty when uploading documents or have any queries regarding the tender submission, please contact the eTenders helpdesk directly via phone +353 818001459, Email irish-eproc-helpdesk@eurodyn.com or select 'Contact Us' on the home page.

Accessing documents
In order to download all documents associated with a particular Call for Tender, Economic Operators must express an interest in the Call for Tender by associating a user from your organisation with the CfT. It is important to note that you must ensure you ASSOCIATE your company with this tender competition. To do this you must do the following:

(a) Log-in to the system;
(b) Locate the competition using the Advanced Search by Contracting Authority or Resource ID
(c) Click on the hyperlink for the competition which will bring you to the CfT Workspace
(d) In the Show CfT Menu for the competition click on the "Expression of Interest" in the drop down menu
(e) Complete the "Association with the CfT" tab.
(f) This will then provide you with a link to "Tender" under the Show CfT Menu

Submitting your Tender
In responding to respond to a tender without an electronic ESPD, a number of steps are required. The final step involves clicking on a Submit button and receiving the following status:



(d) Closing date for Tenders

The closing date for tenders	Is **22nd December 2026** at **12:00** (Irish time)

It is the responsibility of the tenderer to ensure that their tender is complete and is uploaded / submitted by the designated deadline.

(e) Queries

All queries regarding this tender should be submitted via the messaging facility on www.etenders.gov.ie. Please submit queries as soon as possible.

The closing date for queries	Is **Tuesday 15 December 2026** at **12:00** (Irish time)
Process for submitting queries	**Via www.etenders.gov.ie only**

In circulating responses, queries will be edited to avoid disclosing the identity of the querist and will be circulated to all parties who have expressed an interest in the procurement on the eTenders website.

(f) Qualification of Tenders

Please note that qualifications to a Tender may be considered a counter offer and may render the tender invalid.

(g) Extension of Tender Period

The Contracting Authority reserves the right, at its sole discretion, to extend the closing date for receipt of tenders by giving notice in writing (by post or electronic means) to all parties who have expressed an interest in the notice via eTenders no later than six days before the original closing date.

(h) Tender Validity Period

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

(i) Amendment of Tender Documentation

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

(j) Collusive Tendering

If any Tendering Party is found to have, at any time, offered to give or to have agreed to offer or give to any person, any bribe, gift, gratuity, commission or consideration of any kind as an inducement or reward for taking or forbearing to take any action in relation to the obtaining of its Tenders, or for showing or forbearing to show any favour or disfavour to any person in relation to its Tenders, the bid submitted by such Tendering Part shall be automatically disqualified and the circumstances surrounding such action shall be referred to the appropriate authority.

(k) Confidentiality

The distribution of the tender documents is for the sole purpose of obtaining offers. The distribution does not grant permission or licence to use the documents for any other purpose.

Tenderers are required to treat the details of all documents supplied in connection with the tender process as private and confidential.

(l) Conflict of Interest

Any conflict of interest involving a tenderer (or tenderers in the event of a consortium bid) must be fully disclosed to the Contracting Authority. Any registrable interest involving the tenderer and the Contracting Authority or employees of the Contracting Authority or their relatives must be fully disclosed in the tender submission or should be communicated to the Contracting Authority immediately upon such information becoming known to the tenderer, in the event of this information only coming to their notice after the submission of a bid and prior to the award of the contract. The terms 'registrable interest' and 'relative' shall be interpreted as per Section 2 of the Ethics in Public Office Act, 1995. Failure to disclose a conflict of interest may disqualify a tenderer or invalidate an award of contract, depending on when the conflict of interest comes to light.

(m) Anti-Competitive Conduct

Tenderers attention is drawn to the Competition Act 2002 (as amended, the "2002 Act"). The 2002 Act makes it a criminal offence for Tenderers to collude on prices or terms in a public procurement competition.

(n) Freedom of Information Acts

Tenderers should be aware that, under the Freedom of Information Act 2014 and the European Communities (Access to Information on the Environment) Regulations 2007 to 2014, information provided by them during this Competition may be liable to be disclosed.

Tenderers are asked to consider if any of the information supplied by them in their Tender should not be disclosed because of its confidentiality or commercial sensitivity. If Tenderers consider that certain information is not to be disclosed because of its confidentiality or commercial sensitivity, Tenderers must, when providing such information, clearly identify the specific sections of their Tender containing such information and specify the reasons for its confidentiality or commercial sensitivity. For the avoidance of doubt Tenderers may not assert confidentiality or commercial sensitivity over the entire Tender but must clearly identify the specific section containing such information. If Tenderers do not identify information as confidential or commercially sensitive, it is liable to be released in response to a request under the above legislation without further notice to or consultation with the Tenderer. The Contracting Authority will, where possible, consult with Tenderers about confidential or commercially sensitive information so identified before making its decision on a request received. The Contracting Authority accepts no liability whatsoever in respect of any information provided which is subsequently released (irrespective of notification) or in respect of any consequential damage suffered as a result of such obligations.

(o) Data Protection

"Data Protection Laws" means all applicable national and EU data protection laws, regulations and guidelines including but not limited to Regulation (EU) 2016/679 on the protection of natural persons with regard to the processing of personal data and on the free movement of such data, and repealing Directive 95/46/EC (the "General Data Protection Regulation"), the Data Protection Act, 2018 and any guidelines and codes of practice issued by the Data

Protection Commission or other supervisory authority for data protection in Ireland from time to time.

The Contracting Authority will be a Controller (where Controller has the meaning given under the Data Protection Laws) in respect of any Personal Data (where Personal Data has the meaning given under the Data Protection Laws) required to be provided by the Tenderer in response to this Request for Tender.

The Tenderer, as Controller in respect of any Personal Data provided by it in its Tender, is required to confirm by way of statement in the "Declarations" section of the accompanying Tender Response Document that all Data Subjects (where Data Subject has the meaning given under the Data Protection Laws) whose Personal Data is provided by the Tenderer have consented to the processing of such Personal Data by the Tenderer, the Contracting Authority, the Evaluation Team and the supplier of the etenders.gov.ie website, for the purposes of the participation of the Tenderer in this Competition or that the Tenderer otherwise has a legal basis for providing such Personal Data to the Contracting Authority for the purposes of its participation in this Competition.

(p) Tax Clearance Certificate

It will be a condition of award of this contract and any subsequent contract that the successful economic operator(s) comply with all EU and national tax laws. Economic operators are referred to the Irish Revenue web site http://www.revenue.ie/. Non-resident economic operators should apply to the Office of the Revenue Commissioners, Non-Resident Tax Clearance Unit, Office of the Collector General, Sarsfield House, Francis Street, Limerick, Ireland; e-mail: nonrestaxclearance@revenue.ie.

(q) Confidentiality of Evaluation

After the official opening of Tenders, information relating to the examination, clarification, evaluation and comparison of Tenders and recommendations concerning the award of contract will not be disclosed to Tenderers or other persons not officially concerned with such process until the award of contract to the successful Tenderer has been announced and in conformity with national law.

(r) Publicity

Tenderers shall not undertake (or permit to be undertaken) at any time, whether at this stage or after the award of the agreement, any publicity activity with any section of the media in relation to this tender/agreement other than with the prior written consent of the Contracting Authority. Such consent shall extend to the content of any publicity. For the purposes of this paragraph, the word "media" includes (but is not limited to) radio, television, newspapers, trade and specialist press, the Internet and e-mail accessible by the public at large and the representatives of such media.

The Contracting Authority will have the right to publicise or otherwise disclose to any third-party information regarding this process and the agreement.

(s) Clarification of Tenders

Laois County Council may ask Tenderers for clarification of their Tenders, including breakdowns of unit prices. No change in the price or substance of the Tender shall be sought, offered or

permitted. To assist in finalising the tender evaluation, selected tenderers may be invited to attend clarification meetings with Laois County Council.

(t) Correction of Errors

Detailed pricing of all tenders will be examined for errors that might alter the tender pricing as determined from the figures on the tender form. Where a discrepancy arises between any figure submitted on the pricing element of eTenders versus the content of the Tender Submission, the Tender Submission figures will be used in the assessment.

In the case of manifest errors - where there is a discrepancy between the unit price and the total amount derived from the multiplication of the unit price and the quantity, the unit price as quoted will normally govern.

The amount stated in the tender form will be adjusted by the Contracting Authority in accordance with the above procedure and, with the agreement of the tenderer, shall be considered as binding upon the tenderer. Without prejudice to the above, a tenderer not accepting the correction of their tender as outlined may have their tender rejected.

(u) Replacement Personnel

Notification must be sent via www.etenders.gov.ie as soon as possible to the Contracting Authority on any proposed change of nominated personnel, such change to be subject to the written approval of the Contracting Authority. Replacement personnel must be of equal or better standing than the existing personnel in terms of qualifications and experience.

(v) Change in Composition of a Tender

Laois County Council reserves the right, but is not obliged, to disqualify any Tenderer that makes any change to its composition after submission of a Tender.

(w) Notification of Tender Evaluations

All tenderers will be informed of the outcome of their tenders following tender evaluation and any necessary clarifications. The Contracting Authority will issue a Letter of Regret with the name of the winning tenderer(s) and the scores of the tenderer and the winning tenderer.

(x) Award of Framework / Contract

In accordance with the procurement regulations Laois County Council will not award the framework / contract for a period of at least 14 days (where notification is sent via electronic means) after notification of the outcome is sent to tenderers.

When appropriate an award notice will be despatched to the Official Journal of the European Union announcing the results of the competition no later than 30 days after the award of the contract. It should be noted that it is standard practice for the Client to include the price of the winning tender or the range of prices of tenders received in the publication of the award notice as required under European procurement rules.

Laois County Council reserves the right not to proceed with the competition at any stage or not to award a contract.

(y) Possible TUPE Considerations

Participants are advised that in the event of significant transfer of undertakings, businesses or parts of businesses, the provisions of SI 131 of 2003 *European Communities (Protection of Employees on Transfer of Undertakings – TUPE*) *Regulations 2003* may apply. The successful tenderer will therefore be required to indemnify the contracting authority fully in respect of any losses, damages, costs or expenses of any kind incurred arising from their compliance with the TUPE Regulations.

At tender stage, tenderers will be required to inform themselves by their own enquiries as to the potential applicability of the TUPE Regulations and to take this factor into account when preparing their tenders, which will be deemed to include all the potential costs likely to be incurred as a result of any ensuing obligations under TUPE.

(z) Cost of Preparation of Tender

Laois County Council will not be liable for any costs incurred by tenderers in the preparation of proposals or any associated work effort. It is the responsibility of the tenderer to ensure that they are fully aware and understand the requirements as laid down in this document. Tenderers will be responsible for any costs incurred by them in the event of their being required to attend clarification or other meetings or make a presentation of their Tender.

GENERAL INFORMATION RELEVANT TO SUCCESSFUL TENDERERS

(i) Currency and Payments

The currency and invoices in which all prices and rates shall be tendered, and which payments under the contract will be paid, shall be Euros (€). All prices and rates quoted should be exclusive of VAT.

Invoices shall be submitted in accordance with the terms agreed with the Contracting Authority.

The Council undertakes to make all payments solely under the terms of the European Communities (Late Payment in Commercial Transactions) Regulations 2012.

(ii) Withholding Tax

Where applicable, payments shall be subject to Irish 'Professional Services Withholding Tax' at the prevailing rate (currently at 20%) as laid down by the Revenue Commissioners in Ireland. Non-residents may be able to reclaim such deducted Tax from the Office of the Revenue Commissioners in Ireland, International Claims Section located currently at Government Buildings, Nenagh, Co. Tipperary, Ireland (Tel: +353-67-63400).

(iii) Irish Legislation and Law

Tenderers should be aware that national legislation applies in other matters such as Employment, Working Hours, Official Secrets, Data Protection and Health and Safety. Tenderers must have regard to statutory terms relating to minimum pay and to legally binding industrial or sectoral agreements in the Contracting Authority tenders and in delivering contracts awarded to them. The contract[s] awarded on foot of this tender process will be governed by Irish law.

(iv) Dignity at Work

The successful tenderer(s) shall comply with all relevant legislation relating to dignity at work. As a public body and employer, the Contracting Authority is committed to a policy of equality of opportunity for all personnel.

In line with the Disability Act 2005, accessibility requirements should be clearly stated in request for tenders / quotations where applicable. Under Section 27 of the Act the Contracting Authority is required to ensure that both the goods supplied, and services provided to it are accessible to persons with disabilities.

(v) Change in Law

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