



Request for Tender

Single supplier framework for the provision PR and communications services



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Contents

1	Introduction	4
1.1	Local government in Ireland	4
1.2	The organisation	4
1.3	Governance.....	5
1.4	Context for this tender	5
1.4.1	Service objectives	6
1.5	Tender notes.....	8
2	Requirements	9
3	Format of response.....	10
3.1	Tenderer details.....	11
3.2	Declaration of financial stability	12
3.3	Declaration of legal compliance	13
3.4	References and case studies.....	14
3.5	Details of proposed personnel.....	18
3.6	Understanding of the brief	18
3.7	Details of the proposed service	19
3.8	Details of quality assurance procedures.....	20
3.9	Details of proposed project/account manager.....	20
3.10	Rates	21
3.11	Insurance details.....	21
3.12	Minimum contractual terms.....	22
3.13	Freedom of Information details.....	22
4.	Evaluation procedure.....	23
4.1	Eligibility criteria	24
4.2	Qualification criteria	25
4.3	Award criteria	26
4.3.1	Scoring methodology for qualitative criteria.....	28
5	General terms and conditions	30
5.1	Awarding body and basis of award.....	30
5.2	Variants.....	30
5.3	Scope of the agreement	30
5.4	Confidentiality, ethics and Freedom of Information	31
5.5	Customers of the agreement.....	31
5.6	Notification of interest	32
5.7	Tender process.....	33

5.8	Tender costs.....	33
5.9	Schedule and tender return details	33
5.10	Declaration of relevant information	34
5.11	Implied information requirements	34
5.12	Format of the tender response.....	34
5.13	Communications and enquiries	35
5.14	Tax clearance certificates and other compliance	36
5.15	Consortium bids and sub-contracting.....	36
5.16	Contact details	37
5.17	Validity of tender	37
5.18	Compliance with instructions to tenderers	37

1 Introduction

1.1 Local government in Ireland

There are 31 local authorities in Ireland delivering a broad range of services in relation to roads, traffic, planning, housing, libraries, economic and community development, environment, recreation and amenity services, fire services and maintaining the register of electors.

1.2 The organisation

The LGMA is a state agency that provides a range of professional services to local authorities.

We work collaboratively with all 31 local authorities to support the coordinated and cost-effective delivery of local government services and policy. We also help local authorities to implement change and enhance performance.

We are an agency of the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage, primarily funded by local authorities.

Our vision

In partnership with local authorities, the LGMA will be a shared centre of excellence in leading sectoral approaches to the development and expansion of exemplary public services at local level.

Our mission

To focus activities to deliver a quality customer experience to local authorities, prioritised on the development and promotion of best practice policies, systems and sectoral approaches to the business challenges facing local authorities.

Our objectives

- To deliver high quality services to local government, demonstrating value for money and continuously adapting to the changing needs of the sector
- To actively support the development and implementation of government policy, utilising leading practice from inside and outside the sector using data as a key

enabler

- To support the development of strategic leadership within local authorities to support the formulation and implementation of strategic plans
- To be the recognised national representative and voice for the local government sector
- To create an open and engaging work environment, seen as a prime organisation for developing the skills and experience to support career progression
- To act as a centre of excellence in the areas within the advisory remit of the LGMA
- To support and strengthen good governance

Further information relating to the LGMA can be found at www.lgma.ie.

1.3 Governance

The LGMA conducts its business in accordance with the rules, regulations and accountabilities which govern state agencies in Ireland. In that regard, a Council of the Board of the agency has oversight through the Board and its committees. The Council of the Board, comprising the Chief Executives of the thirty-one Local Authorities, appoints eight members and the Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage appoint three members to the Board. The business of the Agency is facilitated by a series of sub-committees, recognising the obligations of the Service Level Agreement with the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage.

1.4 Context for this tender

The LGMA supports local authorities in promoting the work they do and the services they provide. This includes support in relation to communications. This includes, for example:

- being a national point of contact and supplying media relations nationally (reactive and proactive) for the local government sector
- running awareness and promotion campaigns on behalf of the local government sector, including media campaigns; and,
- providing media advice, support, and training to local authorities.

As part of this remit, The Local Government Management Agency is seeking to appoint a supplier for the provision of PR and communications services to the LGMA.

This supplier must also be available to individual local authorities to source services under this contract, as outlined at section 5.5.

The service provider is required to advise and assist the LGMA and local authorities to

effectively represent the local government sector in the media and to promote positive messages on behalf of the sector.

The service provider should support the local authority sector to be a leading, coherent, constructive voice in debates relevant to local authority areas of responsibility and to help the sector to secure opportunities to discuss and publicise the efficiencies and benefits of the sector to the public. The assistance provided under this contract should also support in improving the visibility of local government services and reinforce the vital role local authorities have nationally and within their communities.

Key to this is an understanding and appreciation of the uniqueness of the politically sensitive environment in which the LGMA and local authorities operate and the necessary constraints and limits this imposes in its public communications.

In relation to the communications support LGMA provides to the local authority sector, there are a number of key objectives including to:

- a) highlight achievements and strengthen the reputation of local authorities as economic and community leaders which deliver high quality services.
- b) provide timely and accurate information using the most appropriate channels / routes to audience in the context of media conversations and topics of interest.
- c) put mechanisms in place to address reactive communications requirements.
- d) ensure that key messages are consistent and co-ordinated across all channels;
- e) work to identify and prioritise subject matter for promotion;
- f) raise awareness of the activities of local government.
- g) co-ordinate and organise national responses to major emergencies and crises.
- h) ascertain the communications skills and capability within the sector and support with relevant training programmes and professional development; and,
- i) identify and support local government spokespersons per subject area.

1.4.1 Service objectives

The LGMA is inviting proposals from suitably qualified organisations with the necessary skills and expertise to support LGMA and local authorities in PR and communications.

The service requirements may include:

- Providing PR and communications support in relation to LGMA/local authority campaigns and projects
- Providing support on the development of communications strategies and campaigns by the LGMA and by local authorities.
- Dealing with the media on behalf of the LGMA/local authorities.
- Providing communications advice and support on a 24/7 basis, including crisis communications support and support at short notice.
- Drafting press and other communications materials and advising on engagement with the media.
- Building and fostering key relationships with the media and relevant organisations to ensure the LGMA is the first point of contact for information for the sector.
- Providing media support, advice, and briefings to LGMA and local authority employees representing the sector
- Identifying key themes on which LGMA/local authorities can build messages to the public
- Ensuring that positive examples of the work of local government feature on a regular basis in the media.
- Highlighting achievements and strengthening the reputation of local authorities in the media
- Anticipating and advising in relation to the planned release of information on the activities of local authorities by other bodies and anticipate media interest in response to events, publications, etc in areas of responsibility to local authorities.
- Providing audience level insight and expertise.
- Writing and editing services including assisting in the development and production of media and communications materials.
- Advising on and preparing communications materials for multiple channels.
- Assisting in structuring responses to media queries as they arise and potential media queries in relation to known events.
- Providing media support as part of wider integrated campaigns run by LGMA or local authorities, for example campaigns to promote local authority service, public awareness campaigns, etc.; and,
- Providing comprehensive measurement and evaluation of all activity.

Training

- The supplier will also be expected to provide spokesperson and other media and communications related training to LGMA and local authority employees/representatives. This would include on a one-to-one basis and group basis.

On-call availability and timely assistance on urgent matters and issues management is expected for the duration of the contract.

The supplier will provide quarterly reports to the LGMA on the drawdown of services under

this Framework in a format to be agreed.

1.5 Tender notes

The detailed requirements, format of response and evaluation criteria for this tender are given in sections 2, 3 and 4, and the general terms and conditions that apply to the competition are given in section 5.

Tenderers may submit just one proposal as a prime Tenderer (see section 5.15). However, suppliers may submit a proposal in their own right and participate as sub-contractors in one or more consortium bids.

Proposals, in the format specified in Section 3 of this document, together with supporting documentation, must be submitted electronically through the eTenders website (www.etenders.gov.ie).

Completed proposals should be received no later than **5pm local time on the 7th of March 2022.**

Note: the LGMA is prohibited by the guidelines for public procurement from accepting proposals after the closing date and time of the tender.

Tenders received after the exact date and time notified here or subsequently by circular as the closing date and time of this tender will not be eligible for consideration.

2 Requirements

The minimum and desirable requirements for this tender are as follows:

1. With regard to the Tenderer's Capacity:
 - i. That the Tenderer will be financially stable and legally compliant.
 - ii. That the Tenderer will have a proven track record of delivering similar services satisfactorily.
 - iii. That the Tenderer will commit to having the required insurances in place before contract award.

2. With regard to the Proposed Service:
 - i. That the proposed project team will be sufficiently qualified and experienced to assure the highest quality outcome.
 - ii. That the proposed service displays an understanding of the brief and meets the needs of the LGMA.
 - iii. That the Tenderer will employ rigorous quality assurance mechanisms to ensure the highest quality.

3. With regard to the Management & Administration of the Contract:
 - i. That the proposed service will be closely managed by a suitably qualified project / account manager to ensure adherence to deadlines.

4. With regard to the Terms & Conditions of the Contract:
 - i. That the proposed cost will represent best value for money.
 - ii. That the successful Tenderer will agree to the minimum contractual terms.

3 Format of response

The following sections specify the required format and structure of the tender response. Tenderers shall address each point of each sub-heading in order and provide a concise and complete response in each case.

Tenderers will not cross-reference any of the sections listed below except in the form of footnotes, and only then where the Tenderer believes that such cross-references will assist in the overall understanding of their proposal.

Tenderers' particular attention is drawn to the Preliminary Eligibility Criteria later in this document that require all proposals to conform to the format and structure laid out below. Where a tender does not conform to the required format the Tenderer may be requested to resubmit it in the correct format, on the understanding that the resubmitted tender cannot contain any material change from the original. Failure to resubmit a correctly formatted tender may result in the disqualification of that tender.

Tenderers may also be requested to resubmit their tenders, in part or in whole, in alternative formats that, in the opinion of the LGMA, will expedite the fair and speedy evaluation of tenders. In all cases, any information that is resubmitted as a result of such a request will not contain any material change to the terms and conditions of the original tender. Failure to respond to such requests for reformatting of information may result in the loss of marks under one or several headings or, at the LGMA 's discretion, the rejection of the entire tender.

As outlined below, tenderers should ensure that each of the items in the table below is included in their submission:

Tenderer details
Declaration of financial stability
Declaration of legal compliance
References and case studies
Details of proposed personnel
Understanding of the brief
Details of the proposed service
Details of quality assurance procedures
Details of proposed project/account manager
Rates
Insurance details
Minimum contractual terms
Freedom of Information details

3.1 Tenderer details

This section must include the following information regarding the Tenderer and the Tenderer's partners or sub-contractors:

1. Name and registered address of the prime tenderer.
2. Contact Details for this tender as per the table below:

	Primary Contact	Secondary Contact
Name		
Title		
Email address		
Telephone		
Mobile		
Fax		

3. Partner and subcontractor details, as per the following table:

Name & Address	Function	Relevant Experience	Anticipated % of business

3.2 Declaration of financial stability

Tenderers are required to submit the following declaration, signed by an appropriately competent person (e.g., owner or director of the Tendering organisation or a senior accountant for that organisation).

NAME OF TENDERER: _____

ADDRESS: _____

I, _____, having been duly authorised by the Tenderer, sincerely declare that:

1. I have sufficient knowledge of the Tenderer's affairs to make an informed assessment of the Tenderer's financial position and its capacity to fulfil its obligations under the terms of this proposal for the expected duration of the agreement; and
2. To the best of my knowledge and understanding the Tenderer is financially sound and in no foreseeable danger of not being able to fulfil its obligations under the terms of this proposal for the expected duration of the agreement for any financial reason arising from this proposal or any other activities undertaken by the Tenderer; and

I understand and acknowledge that the provision of inaccurate or misleading information in this declaration may lead to my business/firm/company/partnership being excluded from participation in this or future tenders, and I make this solemn declaration conscientiously believing the same to be true and by virtue of the Statutory Declarations Act, 1938. This declaration is made for the benefit of the Contracting Authority.

Signature of Declarant

Name of Declarant in print or block capitals

Declarant's Relationship to or Role within _____
the Tendering Organisation

3.3 Declaration of legal compliance

Tenderers are required to submit the following declaration, signed by an appropriately competent person (e.g., owner or director of the Tendering organisation).

NAME OF TENDERER: _____

ADDRESS: _____

I, _____, having been duly authorised by the Tenderer, sincerely declare that:

1. The Tenderer is not bankrupt or being wound up, its affairs are not being administered by a court, it has not entered into an arrangement with its creditors, it has not suspended its business activities nor is it in any analogous situation arising from a similar procedure under national laws and regulations;
2. The Tenderer is not the subject of proceedings for a declaration of bankruptcy, for an order for compulsory winding up or administration by the court or for an arrangement with creditors or of any other similar proceedings under national laws and regulations;
3. Neither the Tenderer, nor any of its directors or partners, has been convicted of an offence concerning professional conduct by a judgment which has the force of res judicata or been guilty of grave professional misconduct (proven by any means which the Contracting Authority can demonstrate) in the course of its or their business;
4. The Tenderer has fulfilled its obligations relating to the payment of taxes or social security contributions in its country of establishment or any other state in which the Tenderer is located;
5. The Tenderer has not been guilty of serious misrepresentation or omission in providing information to a public buying agency, including the Contracting Authority;
6. The Tenderer (or any of its directors or partners) has not been convicted of fraud, money laundering, corruption, or of being a member of a criminal organisation; and

I understand and acknowledge that the provision of inaccurate or misleading information in this declaration may lead to my business/firm/company/partnership being excluded from participation in this or future tenders, and I make this solemn declaration conscientiously believing the same to be true and by virtue of the Statutory Declarations Act, 1938. This declaration is made for the benefit of the Contracting Authority.

Signature of Declarant

Name of Declarant in print or block capitals

Declarant's Relationship to or Role
within the Tendering Organisation

3.4 References and case studies

Tenderers must provide three independent references attesting to the quality of the services provided by the Tenderer to customers with similar service requirements.

Tenderers must provide case study details of PR / communications services provided to these clients that illustrate the tenderer's capacity to develop and deliver the services required under this contract.

At least one of the references must relate to a public sector body, ideally in Ireland but at a minimum in the European Union, to demonstrate that the tenderer has provided services to organisations subject to similar legislative and regulatory regimes as the LGMA.

References are to be provided in the format specified below and Tenderers should note the LGMA's right to contact the named referees without prior consultation with the Tenderer.

References/case studies should:

- Clearly demonstrate that the tenderer has provided the services required in this tender in the recent past (i.e., within the last three years)
- Provide a clear description of the organisation the service was provided to, including whether it was a private or public sector body
- Provide contact details of a person who will verify the information provided in the case study and attest to the quality of services provided. The LGMA may contact the person named and tenderers should advise them of this possibility.
- Demonstrate that tenderers have knowledge expertise and experience of PR and communications services similar to that required in this tender
- Demonstrate that the tenderer has experience of supporting the successful delivery of media and communications campaigns of similar scope.
- Provide a clear description of the work undertaken to support the client; and,
- Provide an outline of how success was measured and achieved.

Each case study should be no more than 1,000 words. Directly related published articles, links, etc. may be attached (not included in the word count)

Reference number 1	
Organisation Name:	
Contact Name:	
Contact Job Title:	
Contact email:	
Contact Phone:	
Description of Work Tenderers must provide a brief description of the work undertaken as it relates to the requirements of this tender, and which clearly demonstrates the Tenderer's track record of successfully providing those services required of this tender. (1,000 words max. Directly related published articles, links, etc. may be attached and will not be included in the word count)	

Reference number 2	
Organisation Name:	
Contact Name:	
Contact Job Title:	
Contact email:	
Contact Phone:	
Description of Work Tenderers must provide a brief description of the work undertaken as it relates to the requirements of this tender, and which clearly demonstrates the Tenderer's track record of successfully providing those services required of this tender (1,000 words max. Directly related published articles, links, etc. may be attached and will not be included in the word count)	

Reference number 3	
Organisation Name:	
Contact Name:	
Contact Job Title:	
Contact email:	
Contact Phone:	
<p>Description of Work</p> <p>Tenderers must provide a brief description of the work undertaken as it relates to the requirements of this tender, and which clearly demonstrates the Tenderer's track record of successfully providing those services required of this tender. (1,000 words max. Directly related published articles, links, etc. may be attached and will not be included in the word count)</p>	

3.5 Details of proposed personnel

Tenders will be evaluated on the quality and relevance of the professional experience, skillset, and qualifications across the overall team of resources proposed.

Tenderers should demonstrate adequate resource capacity and appropriate number and range of skills and sufficient staff at suitable levels of experience to provide effective service, including at short notice.

Tenderers must provide details of the skills, experience and qualifications of staff who may be assigned to work on the project. Information must be provided in in the format below.

Name:	
Job Title:	
Proposed role in this service:	
Relevant skills and experience:	
Academic/Professional Qualifications:	
The mechanism or criteria for access to this person, e.g., on demand, on escalation, etc.	
Please copy this table for each person being proposed for the service	

3.6 Understanding of the brief

As outlined, the appointed supplier will be available to the LGMA and to local authorities to source PR and communications services as outlined above.

1. Media relations proposal – LGMA services

Tenderers must describe what they believe the key relationships between the LGMA, and the Irish media should be and how they propose to assist the LGMA in establishing and managing these relationships, bearing in mind that LGMA primarily engages with the media on behalf of

the local government sector.

Tenderers should also discuss how they propose to make best use of media channels to promote the local authority sector and its services to citizens and to promote relevant positions and messages of the local government sector. (Max 1,000 words)

2. Response to scenario – local authority services

Tenderers must outline how they would approach the development of a PR/Communications Strategy for the launch of a new place brand, developed by a local authority to promote the county and all that it has to offer.

The approach to the development of the Strategy should show an understanding of how local authorities operate and of local government in the context of media and communications and public affairs. The response should also demonstrate an appreciation of the political environment in which local authorities operate and the range of stakeholders with which they engage.

Your response to the scenario must be no more than 1,000 words.

3.7 Details of the proposed service

Tenderers must provide details of how their service will meet the key requirements described below. Sufficient details must be provided in all cases to assure the LGMA of a quality and reliable service.

The proposed service outlined should cover:

- Provision of support to the LGMA in its dealings with the media and provision of advice and support to the LGMA on a 24/7 basis
 - Assistance in proactive media relations including drafting press materials and engaging with media contacts
 - Provision of advice in dealing with queries from the media and other sources
 - Provision of training, advice and briefing to LGMA and local authority chief executives and other employees in relation to media interviews and engagement on behalf of the LGMA/local authority sector
 - Provision of media and communications training in a group setting.
 - Work with the LGMA to identify key themes on which to build messages to the public regarding the local authority sector and to ensure positive examples of the work of
-

local government feature on a regular basis in the media, e.g., assisting in media campaigns, supporting understanding of the local authority sector

- The identification and anticipation of media opportunities and necessary responses.

Your response in relation to the proposed service should be no longer than 1,000 words

3.8 Details of quality assurance procedures

The company should establish a performance indicator mechanism for reporting on the delivery of services under this contract.

Tenderers must provide information on quality assurance procedures in place and their proposed procedure to ensure quality of service is monitored and any quality issues that arise can be identified and dealt with at the earliest opportunity.

Tenderers must demonstrate a considered approach to monitoring and managing the evaluation of the effectiveness of their services.

3.9 Details of proposed project/account manager

Tenderers must provide details of a project/account manager who would be appointed to manage the contract.

Details of the proposed project/account manager should be provided on the following form:

Name	Job Title	Experience managing similar contracts	Academic/Professional Qualifications

3.10 Rates

LGMA services

Tenderers must provide rates for each member of the proposed team allocated to the LGMA account and a blended rate payable by LGMA under this retainer, along with a blended rate.

Name	Hourly rate (ex VAT)
	€
	€
	€
	€

Blended rate (ex VAT)	€
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The blended rate proposed will be used for all services drawn down by the LGMA over the duration of the contract and will be the rate used in Award Criteria Evaluation (see section 4.3)

Local Authority Services

Tenders must also propose an hourly rate and blended rate for drawdown of services by individual local authorities should they require such services.

Name	Hourly rate (ex VAT)
	€
	€
	€
	€

Blended rate (ex VAT)	€
-----------------------	---

Drawdown of services by LGMA and local authorities will not exceed a value of €200,000 over the 12-month period of the contract.

3.11 Insurance details

The successful Tenderer(s) shall be required to hold for the term of any Services Contract

awarded insurances of the type and to the level specified in the RFT. The types of and levels of insurance required are not likely to exceed the following insurances:

Type of Insurance	Indemnity Limit
Employer’s Liability	€13,000,000
Public Liability	€6,500,000
Professional Indemnity	€1,000,000

3.12 Minimum contractual terms

The Tenderer must state their unequivocal agreement to the following:

- (i) That, if successful, the Tenderer will sign and abide by any confidentiality & non-Disclosure agreements required by the LGMA; and
- (ii) That, if successful, the Tenderer will agree that all IPR arising from the project will belong to the LGMA.

3.13 Freedom of Information details

Tenderers are required to complete the table below, clearly identifying any sensitive information in the sections listed together with reasons for its sensitivity. Tenderers are also requested to provide a time-limit after which the information would no longer be deemed sensitive.

Tenderers should note that tender documents as a class are not regarded as sensitive and therefore only those specific items detailed in the table below will be considered for withholding from release. Tenderers should further note that listing an item in the table below will not prevent it from being released where the LGMA's Freedom of Information Officer or the Information Commissioner does not believe that withholding the information serves the public interest.

Section	Information	Reason	Expiry Date for Sensitivity
3.2 Declaration of Financial Stability			
3.3 Declaration of Legal Compliance			

3.4 References and case studies			
3.5 Details of proposed personnel			
3.6 Understanding of the brief			
3.7 Details of the proposed service			
3.8 Details of quality assurance procedures			
3.9 Details of proposed project/account manager			
3.10 Rates			
3.11 Insurance details			
3.12 Minimum contractual terms			

4. Evaluation procedure

The LGMA will ensure a confidential, fair, and equitable evaluation of proposals. This evaluation will be based on the evaluation procedures set out in this section.

Tender evaluation will be in the following three phases:

1. **Preliminary Eligibility:** The first phase of evaluation of the responses will determine whether the tender meets the formal eligibility criteria set out in section 4.1 below. Only those tenders meeting the preliminary eligibility criteria will go forward to the second phase of the evaluation.
2. **Qualification Criteria:** The second stage of the evaluation will, as described in section 4.2 below, involve an assessment of the Tenderer's capacity to fulfil the obligations of the agreement.
3. **Award Criteria:** Each proposal that conforms to the Preliminary Eligibility and Qualification Criteria will be evaluated according to the criteria given in section 4.3 below by the LGMA.

During the evaluation period clarifications may be sought in writing (including e-mail) from Tenderers. Clarifications may include testimonials from customers in support of particular aspects of a tender, whether such aspects are contained in the original submission or in subsequent responses to requests for clarification.

Deadlines will be imposed for the receipt of such clarifications and failure to meet these deadlines may result in the disqualification of the Tender or loss of marks.

Responses to requests for clarification shall not materially change any of the elements of the proposals submitted.

Unsolicited communications from Tenderers will not be entertained during the evaluation period.

The LGMA may, at its discretion, request meetings with individual Tenderers during the evaluation period for the purposes of clarifying any aspect of the Tenderer's proposal. Such meetings will be strictly confidential and will not result in any material change to the original tender. No discussions regarding the progress of the evaluation or the Tenderer's performance will be entered into. All such meetings will be held at the convenience of the LGMA.

The LGMA reserves the right to make any such enquiries it deems necessary to corroborate any claims made in the proposal or to determine the relevance of any proposed item, service, or technology to the perceived needs of the LGMA or to gauge their relative merits with regard to alternatives or competitors. Such enquiries may be made of known current or past customers of the Tenderer or their partners or sub-contractors, industry information sources, or any other source that in the LGMA's opinion can offer a competent assessment of the particular matter in question. The LGMA is under no obligation to establish the veracity of any such assessments other than to give reasons why it believes the source to be competent in the particular matter.

The LGMA is under no obligation other than those detailed in the Irish Freedom of Information Act to inform Tenderers that such enquiries are being made or to inform them of the results or impact of any such enquiries on their eventual performance.

Where the circumstances of the particular tender warrant it, the LGMA may test a sample of the proposed solution or product. Any such tests will be designed and conducted by the LGMA or its agents with a view to measuring the proposed solution or product's performance against specific award criteria. The findings of the LGMA or its agents in any such tests will be final regardless of the proposed solution or product's performance in apparently similar or identical tests carried out by other organisations.

4.1 Eligibility criteria

There are four basic requirements with which proposals must comply before being considered for evaluation, as explained below:

1. **Closing Date:** Proposals must have met the deadline stated in section 5.9 of this document, or such revised deadline as may be notified to Tenderers by the LGMA. Tenderers must note that the LGMA is prohibited from accepting any proposals after that deadline.
2. **Delivery Format:** Proposals must be delivered in the format specified in section 5.12 of this document. This will ensure that the tender will be included with other tenders received for evaluation. The LGMA will not accept responsibility for tenders delivered in any other format. Tenders delivered in any other format may be rejected.
3. **Format and Structure of the Proposals:** Proposals must conform to the Format and Structure detailed in section 3 of this document or such revised format and structure as may be notified to Tenderers by the LGMA. Failure to comply with the prescribed format and structure may result in the tender being rejected at this stage.
4. The proposal must meet all of the minimum requirements specified in these Instructions to Tenderers, i.e.
 - I. References and case studies are provided as per section 3.4
 - II. Details of proposed personnel are provided as per section 3.5
 - III. Understanding of the brief is provided as per section 3.6
 - IV. Details of the proposed service includes sufficient details on how the service will be provided as per section 3.7
 - V. Details of quality assurance procedures are included as per section 3.8
 - VI. A project/account manager is proposed as per section 3.9
 - VII. Service rates are included as per section 3.10
 - VIII. Insurance details are included as per section 3.11
 - IX. Agreement to abide by confidentiality and non-disclosure agreements is given as per section 3.12
 - X. Agreement that LGMA is the owner of any IPR arising from the project is given as per section 3.12

4.2 Qualification criteria

Tenderers that have met the preliminary eligibility criteria will be assessed on the basis of the following Qualification Criteria:

- | | |
|----------------------------------|-----------|
| 1. Financial & Economic Standing | Pass/Fail |
|----------------------------------|-----------|
-

The Tenderer will be deemed qualified under this criterion if the signed declaration required under section 3.2 is provided.

2. Personal & Legal Circumstances

Pass/Fail

The Tenderer will be deemed qualified under this criterion if the signed declaration required under section 3.3 is provided.

3. Technical Capacity

Pass/Fail

The Tenderer will be deemed qualified under this criterion if:

- i. Three references and case studies provided in response to section 3.4 demonstrate appropriate experience on the part of the Tenderer.
- ii. Three references and case studies provided in response to section 3.4 above describe successful delivery of outcomes and objectives similar to those required under this tender.

4.3 Award criteria

Tenders will be awarded marks under each of the award criteria listed in this section to determine the most economically advantageous proposals.

	Award criteria	Tenderer must demonstrate	Maximum marks available
1	Ultimate cost	See calculation of total cost (below)	200
2	Professional experience	<p>In response to section 3.4 above, tenderers' references and case studies must demonstrate</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A quality driven approach to delivering services required under this contract in the recent past • Expert knowledge and experience of PR and communications, including in 	200

		<p>relation to public sector communications</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A proven track record in supporting the successful delivery of media and communications services of a similar scope to those required 	
3	Team and capacity – quality, quantity, and experience of resources	<p>In response to section 3.5 above, tenderers must demonstrate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sufficient professional experience, skills, and qualifications appropriate to the service required • Experience working with public sector clients • Adequate resource capacity to manage multiple projects at the same time • Appropriate number and range of skills and sufficient staff at suitable levels of experience to provide effective service, including at short notice 	150
4	Understanding of the brief	<p>In response to section 3.6 above, tenderers must demonstrate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Considered understanding of the key relationships necessary between the LGMA and the Irish media and insight into how these relationships should be managed • Considered proposal in relation to how media channels can be best used to promote the local authority sector and local authority messages • Considered proposed approach in relation to the scenario as described that assures the LGMA that the tenderer has a good understanding of local government in the context of PR and communications priorities and has taken account of the unique environment in which local authorities operate and the range of stakeholders with which they engage. 	200
5	Merit of proposed service	<p>In response to section 3.7 above, tenderers must</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • demonstrate that their proposed service will meet the key requirements • assure the LGMA of a quality and reliable service across all of the areas outlined 	200
6	Quality	In response to section 3.8 above, tenderers	50

	assurance procedures	must: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • show a considered approach to monitoring and managing the evaluation of the effectiveness of service • provide quality assurance procedures that ensure issues can be identified and dealt with at the earliest opportunity 	
	Total		1,000

4.3.1 Scoring methodology for qualitative criteria

The qualitative criteria (items 2-5 above) will be assessed in the first instance by reference to the bands listed below, then given a percentage score within the appropriate band. This percentage score will be applied to the marks available under the criterion to obtain the Tenderer's mark for that criterion. Marks under each criterion will be rounded to the nearest whole number.

Scoring Bands for Qualitative Criteria	
Band (% Range)	Meaning
5 (81 – 100)	Excellent response that fully meets and exceeds the minimum requirements, and provides very comprehensive, detailed, and convincing assurance that the Tenderer will deliver to an excellent standard.
4 (61 – 80)	A very good response that meets the minimum requirements and exceeds them in some respects. Response provides detailed assurance that the Tenderer will deliver to a very good or high standard.
3 (41 – 60)	A satisfactory response which demonstrates a reasonable understanding of minimum requirements and gives reasonable assurance of delivery to an adequate standard but does not provide sufficiently convincing assurance to award a higher mark.
2 (21 – 40)	A response where reservations exist. Lacks full credibility/convincing detail and does not provide confidence to the Contracting Authority that the minimum required Goods and associated Services will be successfully delivered.
1 (1 – 20)	A response where serious reservations exist. This may be because, for example, insufficient detail is provided, or the response has fundamental flaws, or is seriously inadequate or seriously lacks credibility with a high risk of non-delivery.

0 (0%)	No response or partial response only and poor evidence provided in support of it: failure to meet the requirements.
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Calculation of total cost

Cost will be based on the blended hourly rate for LGMA services, as outlined in section 3.10

The lowest price that meets all of 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 formula outlined below.

A	Ultimate cost from lowest submission	
B	Ultimate cost for submission being considered	
C	Maximum points available for this criterion	200
Formula for awarding scores		$(200 \times A) / B$

5 General terms and conditions

5.1 Awarding body and basis of award

The awarding authority is the Local Government Management Agency (LGMA)

The basis of award will be the most economically advantageous tender or tenders according to the criteria specified in section 4 above. The LGMA is not obliged to accept the lowest priced or any tender, nor is it obliged to award an agreement on foot of this tender.

The LGMA reserves the right to terminate this tender exercise at any time prior to the signing of contracts.

5.2 Variants

Variants are not permitted.

5.3 Scope of the agreement

This request for tender is intended to establish a single supplier framework for the provision of PR and Communication services for a period of 12 months with a possible extension for a further 12 months.

The LGMA will remain free to source the products or services being the subject of the agreement in part or in whole outside the agreement at their own discretion.

No obligation will exist on the LGMA to purchase any quantity of any product or service under the agreement. Details of initial and estimated order volumes are provided for illustration only.

No obligation to purchase any product or service not covered by the scope of the agreement

will exist on the LGMA.

5.4 Confidentiality, ethics, and Freedom of Information

The LGMA undertakes to use its best endeavours to hold confidential any information provided by tendering bodies in response to this invitation to tender, subject to its obligations under law, including the Irish Freedom of Information Act. Please note that, in response to a request under the Freedom of Information Act, information not identified as sensitive (with supporting reasons) could be released. Therefore, in responding to this invitation to tender, tendering bodies should identify the specific information that they do not wish to be disclosed, stating the reasons for its sensitivity. Decisions in relation to any Freedom of Information request are subject to appeal to the Information Commissioner and the courts by the person who made the request.

The LGMA's policy with regard to notifying unsuccessful Tenderers is to limit any discussion, whether in writing or in post-award meetings, to the specific Tenderer's proposal. As a rule, only the successful Tenderer will be named, either publicly or in meetings or correspondence with unsuccessful Tenderers, though the LGMA does reserve the right to release details of all tenders where it deems it appropriate to do so. The commercial interests of all Tenderers will be preserved as far as possible, including the confidentiality of the terms and conditions of the successful proposal where the successful Tenderer requests it.

Any conflicts of interest involving a Tenderer, any member of a consortium bid, proposed partners or sub-contractors must be fully disclosed to the LGMA, particularly where there is a conflict of interest in relation to any recommendations or proposals put forward by the tendering body.

Any declarable interest involving the Tenderer, Tenderer's partners, subcontractors, or others involved in the submission of the Tenderer's proposal and any employee of the LGMA or any person connected to them, must be fully disclosed in response to this RFT, or should be communicated to the LGMA 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 'declarable interest', 'employee' and 'connected person' shall be interpreted as per Section 166 of the Local Government Act, 2001.

5.5 Customers of the agreement

The organisations that can purchase under this agreement are as follows:

- Local Government Management Agency (LGMA)
- Carlow County Council
- Cavan County Council
- Clare County Council
- Cork City Council
- Cork County Council
- Donegal County Council
- Dublin City Council
- Dun Laoghaire Rathdown County Council
- Fingal County Council
- Galway City Council
- Galway County Council
- Kerry County Council
- Kildare County Council
- Kilkenny County Council
- Laois County Council
- Leitrim County Council
- Limerick City & County Council
- Longford County Council
- Louth County Council
- Mayo County Council
- Meath County Council
- Monaghan County Council
- Offaly County Council
- Roscommon County Council
- Sligo County Council
- South Dublin County Council
- Tipperary County Council
- Waterford City & County Council
- Westmeath County Council
- Wexford County Council
- Wicklow County Council
- Northern and Western Regional Assembly
- Eastern and Midlands Regional Assembly
- Southern Regional Assembly

5.6 Notification of interest

Parties that intend to pursue this tender should register their interest on

www.eTenders.gov.ie. Registration is free and by doing so prospective Tenderers will be kept informed of any updates to the tender process and documentation.

5.7 Tender process

The anticipated value of this tender falls below the threshold for Directive 2014/24 and therefore this process is not subject to the provisions of that directive.

Notwithstanding this, the LGMA will conduct the tender in accordance with the core principles governing public procurement and applicable Irish Government guidelines.

5.8 Tender costs

Tenderers shall bear all costs associated with the preparation and submission of their tenders, including any attendances, deliveries, collections, or research required as part of this tender or in response to any requests for clarification, and the LGMA shall not be responsible or liable for any costs or expenses regardless of the conduct or outcome of the tender process.

5.9 Schedule and tender return details

Tenders are to be received no later than **5pm local time on the 7th of March 2022.**

The LGMA may, at its own discretion, revise the closing date and time given here. Any such revisions will be advised to those parties that have notified the LGMA of their interest in pursuing this tender as per section 5.6 above.

Tenderers should note that the LGMA is prohibited from accepting any tender received after the exact date and time specified. Furthermore, any tender that is not delivered in the prescribed format may be rejected.

It is the responsibility of the Tenderer to ensure that their submissions are presented in the correct format and are received on time.

Prior to the latest date for the receipt of tenders the LGMA may issue a Notice by circular to all Tenderers that have notified the LGMA of their interest in pursuing this tender as per section 5.6 above, deleting, varying, or extending any item in the tender documents. Any such

notice shall then become one of the Tender Documents and shall be treated as such by the Tenderer. Any such notice shall issue no later than 10 working days before the latest date set for the receipt of tenders.

Proposals, in the format specified in Section 3 of this document, together with supporting documentation, must be submitted electronically through the eTenders website (www.etenders.gov.ie).

Tenders delivered by any other means (including email or fax) will not be accepted.

Tenders will be opened by the Chief Executive of the Local Government Management Agency or at least two officers delegated by him for this purpose.

5.10 Declaration of relevant information

Tenderers must disclose all relevant information to ensure that all tenders are fairly and legally evaluated. Any attempt to withhold any information that the Tenderer knows to be relevant or to mislead the LGMA in the evaluation process in any way will result in the rejection of the tender.

In the event of an agreement being awarded to a Tenderer that has knowingly withheld relevant information or otherwise misled the LGMA in the evaluation process in any way those circumstances will be grounds for default on the part of the Tenderer and may give rise to liabilities under the terms of the agreement.

5.11 Implied information requirements

Wherever information is requested on costs or prices the Tenderer must furnish the costs or prices proposed by them for this tender unless otherwise explicitly requested.

Wherever information is requested on a topic, the Tenderer must supply details of any relevant costs regardless of whether or not such details are explicitly requested. Tenderer's attention is drawn to the fact that, in the event of an agreement being awarded, the attempted imposition of undeclared costs will be considered a condition for default.

5.12 Format of the tender response

Tenders, including all supporting documentation, must be in English or Irish.

All prices must be quoted in euro and exclusive of VAT.

The required format of the tender document to which Tenderers must comply is specified in section 3 above. The LGMA reserves the right to request that any tender be reformatted, in part or in whole, to the format given in this Request for Tender or any other format that will expedite the speedy and fair evaluation of tenders in the opinion of the LGMA. Tenderers will note that any information resubmitted as a result of such requests for reformatting cannot contain any material change to the terms of the original tender. Failure to provide information in the requested format may result in the loss of marks under one or several headings or, at the discretion of the LGMA, the rejection of a tender.

5.13 Communications and enquiries

All communications, including enquiries, must be submitted via the eTenders website.

Tenderers should note that any queries arising from the Tender Documents or information provided to the Tenderers which may have a bearing on the offer to be made shall be dealt with as soon as possible and in any case not later than 5 working days before the closing date for tenders. No further enquiries will be accepted or processed after **5PM on Monday, February 28th, 2022**

All enquiries and responses will be made available to all prospective Tenderers (identified as those that have notified the LGMA of their interest in pursuing this tender as per section 5.6 above) without disclosing the original enquirer. Prospective Tenderers should take this into account when formulating the enquiry. Responses will be made primarily by e-mail via the eTenders website.

An attempt will be made to reply to queries within 5 working days and to make the response available to all applicants within this timeframe.

The LGMA's only responsibility in regard to communications will be to send such communications to the nominated contact (see section 5.16) by e-mail. The LGMA will not be responsible for ensuring that the nominated contact actually receives any communications other than the specific case of an e-mail being returned as undeliverable.

The LGMA will not accept responsibility for any missed communications or deadlines.

5.14 Tax clearance certificates and other compliance

In the case of a Tenderer resident in the Republic of Ireland it shall be a precondition of award that the Tenderer shall within the stated period produce a current Tax Clearance Certificate or a Sub-Contractor's Certificate. Non-resident Tenderers and their proposed non-resident sub-contractors will require a statement from the Revenue Commissioners in the Republic of Ireland that they are satisfied as to the suitability for tax purposes of the Tenderer to be awarded an agreement. The chosen supplier and all sub-contractors (domestic or otherwise) shall continue to hold, in good standing, current issues of such certificates for the duration of the agreement.

5.15 Consortium bids and sub-contracting

The LGMA encourages the use of sub-contracting as a means of promoting the participation of Small and Medium Enterprises in public procurement. Organisations are therefore encouraged to consider how they might bid for this tender as a consortium under the conditions laid out below.

Consortia must nominate a Prime Tenderer from among their number to act on behalf of the group and as a liaison for the tender process. All communications will be conducted between the LGMA, and the Prime Tenderer and it is the Prime Tenderer's responsibility to disseminate any information received from the LGMA to other members of the consortium.

Any change to the organisations making up a consortium must be notified to the LGMA without delay. Changes that are likely to affect the consortium's performance in the competition may be grounds for rejection of the tender or, where an agreement has been awarded and the changes are likely to affect the consortium's performance of its duties under the agreement, for default.

Where a consortium is successful in this competition the members must nominate a Prime Contractor to enter into the agreement on their behalf and act as a liaison in all matters regarding the agreement. While the Prime Contractor will be responsible for the performance of the consortium members and the satisfactory execution of the agreement as a whole the LGMA will consider means of dealing directly with sub-contractors where it is appropriate to do so (e.g., ordering, invoicing, payment, etc).

The LGMA will not act as arbiter in any dispute between the members of a consortium, either during the tender process or during the lifetime of the agreement.

5.16 Contact details

All communications regarding this tender will be directed:

- to the contact details supplied under section 5.6 above during the advertising period; and
- to the primary or secondary contact details supplied in the Tenderer's response during the evaluation period.

Tenderers must endeavour to ensure that their nominated contact is available for the entire duration of the tendering process. Where this is not possible, the Tenderer must provide the LGMA with an alternative contact immediately, whereupon that alternative will become the nominated contact. Only one contact will be dealt with at any one time regarding all aspects of the tender.

5.17 Validity of tender

The Tenderer will agree to leave their tender open for three months after the closing date for receipt of tenders. All terms offered in the tender will remain valid for this time.

5.18 Compliance with instructions to tenderers

For the purposes of this call for tender, the Instructions to Tenderers comprise all of the following:

- This Request for Tender document
- Any such amendments to the aforementioned as may be notified by the LGMA.

Tenderers are required to fully comply with the above Instructions to Tenderers, or any such amended instructions as may be notified by the LGMA, when preparing their tenders.

Tenderer's particular attention is drawn to the fact that non-compliance with such

instructions will invalidate their tender.