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Scottish Procurement

Cloud Services Framework

(Framework Reference: SP-18-027)

Buyer's Guide

Version 2.8 – February 2023

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1. Foreword and acknowledgements

Scottish Procurement aims to deliver benefits to the people of Scotland through improved value for money for taxpayers, improved goods and services for all our citizens and economic opportunities for Scotland. This is achievable through effective collaboration throughout the procurement cycle.

Scottish Procurement would like to acknowledge the work, support and contribution from all sector representatives. Their input has helped to shape the direction of the project to a successful outcome.

2. Introduction

This guide aims to assist public sector bodies in selecting the most cost effective services from a range of contractors to suit individual requirements. This document is designed to guide organisations through the selection and ordering process and provide organisations with peace of mind regarding the services purchased through this framework agreement.

3. Framework overview

The framework is valid from 1 August 2019 to 31 July 2023.

Framework scope

The scope of the framework agreement is for the provision of cloud services, including private cloud, public cloud, community cloud and co-location services as defined in the framework agreement definitions. For ease of reference and to ensure all round clarity, Scottish Procurement has provided [definitions of cloud services](#) based on the US National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST).

A key driver is to further enhance cloud services available to the Scottish public sector whilst continuing to reduce costs. The framework also supports a number of digital services strategies and programmes, including:

- [Realising Scotland's full potential in a digital world: a digital strategy for Scotland](#)
- ['Data Hosting and Data Centre Strategy'](#)
- [SG Cyber Resilience Plan](#)
- [SG Green ICT Strategy](#)

As part of the framework, contractors will provide the following services requirements, some of which will be mandatory for some contracting authorities, including but not limited to:

Core services:

- Cloud services: private cloud
- Cloud services: public cloud
- Cloud services: community cloud
- Cloud services: hybrid cloud
- Cloud services: co-location
- Cloud transition Services

Key deliverables:

- Data centre services (including computing, storage, firewalls, security, patching, etc.)
- Deliverables to be available at a government security level of “Official”
- Services also be delivered at classification levels above official (secret and top secret) if required
- 24/7 support services
- Availability (minimum 99.9%)
- Compliance with GDPR
- Services to be delivered via government networks, including but not limited to SWAN, Janet, N3, PSN and GSX/GSI
- ISO 27001 and ISO 27017 compliance or equivalent
- Business continuity and disaster recovery services
- Maximum Power Usage Effectiveness (PUE) Rating of 1.6

Out of scope

For the avoidance of doubt, the following products / services are **NOT** in scope:

- Software as a Service (SaaS)
- Fully managed IT services
- Unified communication (which covers customer user-interface)
- Creating applications
- Web development
- Web design
- Creating and updating content
- Video streaming
- Procurement of hardware

Support for the Scottish Public Sector

Organisations that require further guidance and advice on their Cloud Services requirements in order to develop their specification further or to scope possible options can also contact the [Cloud First programme](#).

The role of the Cloud First programme is to encourage and support public sector bodies towards using cloud services and realise the benefits of cloud computing. The programme focusses on sharing both information and knowledge, which organisations can use when designing services in cloud.

There is great demand across the public sector for cloud services and organisations are already using a variety of platforms. The Cloud First programme aims to influence organisations from a position of knowledge and to promote best practice across the public sector. The Cloud Centre of Excellence (CCoE) and a Cloud Community has been established across the public sector to enable this.

Scottish Procurement points of contact

Alasdair Rowan
Senior Portfolio Specialist | Scottish
Procurement
Scottish Government, 5 Atlantic Quay, 150
Broomielaw, Glasgow, G2 8LU
Phone: 07530 818401
Email: alsadair.rowan@gov.scot

Margaret Anne McKeown
Portfolio Manager | Scottish Procurement
Scottish Government, 5 Atlantic Quay, 150
Broomielaw, Glasgow, G2 8LU
Phone: 07901 102899
Email: margaretanne.mckeown@gov.scot

Framework service providers

This is a multi-contractor framework with twelve framework service providers.

Organisations looking for further information should use the contact information below

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|---|---|---|
| <p>Brightsolid Online Technology Limited Gateway House, Luna Place, Technology Park, Dundee, DD2 1TP</p> <p>Contact: Malcolm Smith Phone: 07584 146174 Email: malcolm.smith@brightsolid.com</p> | <p>CAE Technology Services Limited CAE House, Maylands Avenue Hemel Hempstead Industrial Estate Hemel Hempstead HP2 7DE</p> <p>Contact: Jorge Analuisa Phone: 07866 116 687 Email: frameworks@caeuk.com</p> | <p>HFD DataVita Limited Phoenix House, Phoenix Crescent, Strathclyde Business Park, Bellshill ML4 3NJ</p> <p>Contact: David Young Phone: 0141 4283555 Mobile: 07752 955635 Email: dyoung@datavita.co.uk</p> |
| <p>Insight Direct (UK) Ltd 5 Candymill Lane, Bothwell Bridge Business Park Hamilton ML3 0FD</p> <p>Contact: Peter Wood Phone: 0161 772 8640 Email: scotlandmail@insight.com</p> | <p>Iomart Group PLC Lister Pavilion, Kelvin Campus, West of Scotland Science Park, Glasgow G20 0SP</p> <p>Contact: Alan Baldwin Phone: 0141 931 6400 Mobile: 07789 990790 Email: tenders@iomart.com alan.baldwin@iomart.com</p> | <p>Navisite Europe Limited 65 West Regent Street, 1st Floor, Elphinstone House, Glasgow G2 2AF</p> <p>Contact: Martin Greenshields Phone: 0141 202 6300 Email: DL-NAV-EMEA-sales@navisite.com</p> |
| <p>Nigsun Limited 4 Modular Business Park, Norton Road, Stevenage SG1 3BB</p> <p>Contact: Hassan Raza Phone: 020 799 34030 Email: contact@nigsun.net</p> | <p>NVT Group Limited Earn House, Earn Avenue Righead Industrial Estate, Belshill ML4 3LW</p> <p>Contact: Hamish Fraser Phone: 01698 749 000 Email: public_sector@nvt.co.uk</p> | <p>Proact IT UK Limited Floor 3, Maxim 3, Parklands Avenue, Eurocentral, ML1 4WQ.</p> <p>Contact: Alasdair Wood Phone: 07920 260 470 Email: scotcloud@proact.co.uk</p> |
| <p>Pulsant Limited Sirius House, Clocktower Estate, South Gyle Crescent, EH12 9LB</p> <p>Contact: John Easson Phone: 07967 828506 Email: john.easson@pulsant.com</p> | <p>Six Degrees Technology Group Limited Commodity Quay, St Katherine Docks, London, E1W 1AZ</p> <p>Contact: David Jackson Phone: 0207 858 4620 Mobile: 07342 881898 Email: publicsector.sales@6dq.co.uk</p> | <p>Storm (ID) Limited Leith Assembly Rooms 43 Constitution Street Edinburgh, EH6 7BG</p> <p>Contact: Paul McGinness Phone: 0131 561 1250 Email: tenders@stormid.com</p> |

Framework benefits

The benefits for public bodies using the framework are:

- maximising efficiency and collaboration through alignment with the strategic priorities in Scotland's Digital Future: Delivery of Public Services, delivery and demonstration of real cash savings, embedding sustainable procurement and improving access to public sector contracts.
- All service providers have secure hosting facilities (security compliance of ISO 27001:2013).
- All service providers meet the requirements within the HMG Cloud Security Principles
- All providers will be required to undertake annual security checks by a qualified National Cyber Security Centre approved CHECK service provider.
- All service providers can provide the core services at the government security classification of 'Official' which was a minimum requirement of the tender.
- Cost savings for the Scottish public sector can be achieved through collaboration and exploring more efficient and sustainable forms of cloud services.
- Strong economic benefits with seven small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) on the framework. All service providers have an economic footprint in Scotland and five of them deliver all cloud services in Scotland thus creating the potential for economic growth and local employment opportunities through call-off contracts.
- All service providers will provide their cloud services within the European Union.
- This award follows a comprehensive tender exercise, under EU public procurement regulations, and provides an easy route to market for contracting organisations

Framework sustainable benefits

As part of the framework agreement, the providers have indicated a number of sustainable benefits, these include:

- Monitoring and measuring PUE ratings 1.6 or under (1.8 if data centre is over five years old)
- Data centres to operate under EU Code of Conduct for Efficiency in Data Centres
- Effective waste management (in line with the Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE) directive).
- Fair Work providers and pay Real Living Wage
- Financial investment and job creation, including apprenticeships and graduation programmes
- Prompt payment through the supply chain

Customers may also wish to actively consider sustainability issues as part of the direct award/mini competition process.

4. Supplementary information

Framework documentation is available on the secure stakeholder group "Procurement Information Network" within [Knowledge Hub](#).

Full details on buying from a framework are detailed in [SPPN 5 2010](#).

If you do not have access to the secure stakeholder site, please ensure you are registered on [Knowledge Hub](#) and complete and email the attached template document to scottishprocurement@gov.scot.

Buyers are reminded of the obligations contained in the Procurement Reform (Scotland) Act 2014 in relation to the award of contracts valued equal to or greater than £50,000 including those awarded as a result of a framework call-off/mini competition.

In particular, Buyers should note that in accordance with Section 23(2) the award of contracts must be publicised on the Public Contracts Scotland website and in accordance with Section 35 contracts must be registered in the contracting authority's "contracts register".

There are two compliant routes to procure under the framework agreement. Contracting authorities can access the framework agreement either by conducting a mini competition or by direct award.

Mini competition

When conducting a mini competition, contracting Authorities should refer to The Standard Terms of Supply (schedule 5) available from the Knowledge Hub, develop their own specification and service levels (schedule 1), pricing (schedule 2), award procedures (schedule 3) and management arrangements (schedule 4). You must also include instructions to tenderers describing how and when to respond, along with details of the evaluation criteria to be used.

The award criteria for mini competitions can cover both cost and quality of service. The weightings should be determined by the contracting authority prior to the issue of any specifications to the contractors, and must be included as part of any mini competition. Responses received by the deadline should then be evaluated and the most economically advantageous contractor awarded the contract.

A call-off contract must be concluded by an award letter and the completion of the Standard Terms of Supply (schedule 5) including the successful tenderers response in schedule 1b (contractor solution); letters must also be issued to all unsuccessful tenderers.

Further information on running a mini competition and best practice guidance is provided in annex A.

Direct award

Where an organisation is able to determine which contractor offers best value for money (quality, price and other areas for example, interoperability) after comparing the prices and service offering (as detailed in the Contractor Pricing Catalogue), they can buy directly without re-opening competition, and this should typically be used for low value/low volume purchases.

Order form

For direct award requirements, there may be occasions when an order form could be used as an alternative to completing the entire schedule 5 document. Please consult

the [framework documentation](#) available via the Knowledge Hub site for a copy of the order form for Cloud Services. If you have any questions, please contact the authority framework manager

5. Frequently asked questions

Framework agreement

1. What is a framework agreement?

A framework agreement is a general term for agreements which can be with either single or multiple contractors that set out the terms and conditions under which specific purchases (call-offs) can be made throughout the framework duration.

Scottish Procurement has entered into this framework agreement with contractors to ensure organisations may obtain value for money in their purchasing whilst being assured that their procurement is compliant with EU procurement regulations.

In establishing this framework agreement, Scottish Procurement carried out a competition in accordance with EU procurement regulations.

Using a framework agreement saves time and money for organisations and ensures that the terms and conditions of their contract with the contractors are robust and follow best practice.

Under the framework agreement and in accordance with EU procurement regulations, organisations can purchase Cloud Services either through mini competition or direct buy.

2. What is the framework agreement start date and what is the duration?

The framework is for an initial two-year period from 1 August 2019 to 1 August 2021, with a maximum two-year option extension period.

3. Who can use the framework?

It is the responsibility of any buying organisation wishing to use the framework agreement to satisfy itself that it is eligible to do so. Entitlement can be established from the terms of the Official Journal of the European Union (OJEU) advert (OJEU reference number: [2019/s040-090688](#). Section 11.2.4 of the advert refer; copy embedded below).

The framework agreement will be available for use by the Scottish Ministers (including agencies), Scottish Non-Departmental Public Bodies, offices in the Scottish administration which are not ministerial offices, cross-border public authorities within the meaning of Section 88(5) of the Scotland Act 1998, the Scotland Office, the Scottish Parliamentary Corporate Body, councils constituted under Section 2 of the Local Government, etc. (Scotland) Act 1994, Scottish Fire and Rescue Service, the Scottish Police Authority, Scottish health boards or special health boards, all NHS Scotland, The Integrated Joint Boards established further to the Public Bodies (Joint Working) Act 2014, bodies registered as social

landlords under the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001, Student Loans Company Ltd, the Forestry Commission, the Commissioner of Northern Lighthouse operating as the Northern Lighthouse Board, Equality and Human Rights Commission, Business Stream Ltd, the Business Gateway National Unit at the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities, further or higher education institutions being fundable bodies within the meaning of section 6 of the Further and Higher Education (Scotland) Act 2005, any public body established by or under the Scotland Act 1998 or any Act of the Scottish Parliament, any association of or formed by one or more of the foregoing, bodies financed wholly or mainly by one or more of the foregoing, bodies subject to management supervision by one or more of the foregoing and bodies more than half of the board of directors or members of which, or, in the case of a group of individuals, more than half of those individuals, being appointed by one or more of the foregoing. In addition to the contracting authorities listed, the framework agreement will be available to charities entered on the Scottish Charity Register and voluntary organisations entered on the membership database of the Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations.

Information about [Scottish Public Bodies](#)

Information about the [Review of Public Procurement in Scotland](#) and links to the other Centres of Expertise

Guidance on this can be found in annex A of [Scottish Government Guidance on Framework Agreements](#). If there is any doubt, legal advice should be sought.

4. Are the framework terms and conditions subject to Scots law?

Yes.

5. Are framework agreement details distributed to individual organisations?

Scottish Procurement will disseminate relevant information concerning the framework via sectoral Centres of Expertise, who then cascade to their stakeholders. Framework terms can be accessed via the secure Scottish Procurement [Knowledge Hub](#) site or via your sector representative.

6. How will my contract be formed?

Your contract will be based on the Standard Terms of Supply (schedule 5), which have been constructed by Scottish Procurement and which forms part of the framework agreement between Scottish Procurement and each contractor awarded a place on the framework. This will be amended to reflect the individual customer organisation, contractor, reference numbers, dates, etc. Specific requirements or variations will be recorded in the supporting schedules. It will constitute the entire agreement between you and the contractor relating to the services ordered.

7. What about data protection?

Both you and the contractor are obliged to duly observe all your obligations under the Data Protection Regulations (including GDPR) which arise in connection with the contract. Under the contract, both you and the contractor are asked to take all

necessary precautions to ensure that all confidential information is treated as confidential and not disclosed or used other than for the purposes of the contract by your employees, agents or sub-contractors. Please refer to the data protection clause in the Standard Terms of Supply (schedule 5) for further details.

8. What if I want to amend a contract?

If you or the contractor wish to amend the contract, such amendments must be agreed between you both and formally amended in accordance with the change control procedures. The contract may be amended only by the written agreement of both parties. Accordingly, the service provider may not unilaterally amend the contract.

Care should be taken when considering amendments to the contract that any amendment would not substantially alter the terms and conditions to such an extent that it could be alleged that the contract is no longer conformant with the framework agreement and therefore not compliant with EU Directives.

Service and management provisions

9. Can we dictate what services we can purchase from the contractor?

Organisations can only select the services that are in scope for this framework.

10. Can we see the full specification for the service?

Yes. The specification and service levels schedule is available. Both of these can be accessed via the Scottish Procurement [Knowledge Hub](#) site or your sector representative.

11. What are the contract management provisions?

The framework will be managed overall by Scottish Procurement, who will be responsible for regular contractor review meetings covering escalated issues, key performance indicators (KPIs), benchmarking and innovation. Organisations will be required to manage the day-to-day operational aspects of their contract with their contractor. Please see schedule 4 – management arrangements. This can be accessed via the Scottish Procurement [Knowledge Hub](#) system or via your sector representative.

12. Is there a process for providing feedback back into Scottish Procurement on issues and the contractor's performance?

Scottish Procurement is committed to managing, monitoring and developing contractor performance and understanding whether our contracts are delivering and meeting the needs of our customers and customer feedback is an essential part of the process. It is proposed that a balance scorecard will be utilised to monitor performance. Feedback and escalation processes will support the framework and robust management information from all contractors will cover several performance measures.

13. Will a copy of the contractor's catalogue be available?

Yes - it will be available from Scottish Procurement's secure [Knowledge Hub](#) site. Access can be obtained by emailing scottishprocurement@gov.scot.

14. Will management information will be provided by contractors as part of the framework?

Yes, management information will be provided by contractors throughout the lifetime of the agreement. Management information will be provided to both the contracting organisation and Scottish Procurement on a monthly or quarterly basis as specified.

15. Are there performance related criteria in the new framework?

As part of the overarching terms and conditions target key performance indicators (KPI) have been agreed. Organisations can also supplement these KPIs within their contracts through mini competition.

16. Does the framework consider Workforce Matters?

For more information on 'Workforce Matters' please see the attached Scottish Procurement Policy Note [SPPN 1/2015](#).

Award process

17. My current contractor is not on the framework; can I to invite them to bid?

No. If you decide to use a framework only the contractors listed on the framework can be invited to bid.

18. Do I need to run a mini competition?

No, direct award is available through the framework but only using the rate cards. Where contracting authorities are able to determine which contractor offers best value for money, the customer organisations can simply place an order on the successful contractor as per the instructions outlined in the ordering procedures and order form (see section 4 – Supplementary Information) and in line with the Standard Terms of Supply (schedule 5)

The mini competition route may offer organisations the potential to achieve bespoke solutions and services to suit their specific requirements when there is a clear need to articulate their actual business requirement before costs can be established and may also result in improved value for money for the customer. More detail can be found in schedule 3 – award and order schedule. This can be accessed via the Scottish Procurement [Knowledge Hub](#) system or via your sector representative.

19. Who is responsible for running a mini competition?

The individual organisation will be responsible for running the mini competition although Scottish Procurement can provide guidance if required.

20. How will organisations conduct a mini competition?

The contracting authority will develop a specification, using the specification template where applicable, which should provide the relevant details to enable contractors to respond.

The contracting authority will invite all contractors to tender for services by issuing the mini competition specification to each contractor on the framework. This may be carried out using the Public Contracts Scotland – Tender system, or using other appropriate procurement processes. The contracting authority must evaluate all responses submitted by the framework contractors by applying the award criteria specified.

21. What award criteria should be used?

The award criteria which can be applied to further competitions will cover both cost and quality of service and will be stipulated in the mini competition tender documentation.

The mini competition award criteria should be made available to the contractors and cover some or all of the areas listed as follows:

- Public cloud
- Private cloud
- Co-location
- Cloud transition
- Account management
- Maintenance and improvement
- System security
- Mobilisation services
- Technical support
- Business continuity and disaster recovery
- Exit management
- Community benefits
- Sustainability

Pricing and invoicing arrangements

22. How long is pricing held for?

Framework prices will not be increased during the first 24 months of agreement, but may be reduced by the agreement of both parties.

23. I am a small organisation can I still benefit from these prices?

Yes, the contractors published framework pricing is available to all organisations regardless of size. The prices provided are the maximum price any customer organisation using the framework agreement would expect to pay when making a call-off from this agreement. Contracting authorities conducting further competition could receive responses lower than those shown in the price list, but not higher than.

24. How can I easily compare the prices on this framework with what I am currently paying?

Scottish Procurement has developed a document which details a summary of all service providers' offerings and pricing to assist organisations in comparing pricing which is available on our secure [Knowledge Hub](#) system.

25. What are the invoicing arrangements?

You need to be absolutely clear about what you expect your payment profile to look like up front and write this into the agreement between yourselves and the contractor. There is a term within schedule 5 that enables you to vary the invoicing frequency rendered by the contractor and this will help you to tailor your payment profile to your specific requirements.

Contractors have been asked to provide eInvoicing and payment via purchasing card (if required) and you must pay all sums due to the contractor within 30 days of receipt of a valid invoice.

Interest is payable on the late payment of any undisputed sums of money in accordance with the Late Payment of Commercial Debts (Interest) Act 1998.

Further details can be found within the Standard Terms of Supply (schedule 5) at section 12 - payment and invoicing.

Annex A – Mini competition and good practice guidance

Listed below are considerations to assist when conducting a mini competition under the framework agreement.

- You must ensure that the mini competition process is conducted in an open, fair and transparent manner at all times and that the award criteria is used, for example, most economical advantageous tender (MEAT).
- You must award the contract to the contractor who has submitted the most economical advantageous tender (MEAT) on the basis of the mini competition award criteria. Weightings can vary to reflect the particular requirement.
- Core terms of the framework agreement cannot be renegotiated; however, terms can be supplemented or refined to reflect the particular circumstances of the order, for example, delivery timescales and payment terms. Framework terms can be accessed via the Scottish Procurement [Knowledge Hub](#) system or via your sector representative.
- A mini competition involves issuing a request to all contractors within the framework agreement capable of meeting the particular need. Do not assume that a contractor cannot meet a particular need unless the framework makes this explicitly clear.
- When using the quick quote facility within Public Contracts Scotland (PCS), please ensure that only those providers on the Scottish Procurement framework agreement are invited to respond.
- Contracting authorities do not have to follow the standstill rules when awarding a call-off contract under the framework agreement, whether by direct award or mini competition. However, they may choose to follow the standstill rules on a voluntary basis (giving summary reasons) when awarding an above-threshold contract by mini competition in order to protect themselves from an ineffectiveness order in the event of a legal challenge. Templates for letters can be found [here](#).

Listed below is a good practice check list to assist when conducting either mini competitions or using the direct award process under the framework agreement.

Good practice check list

- ✓ Devote sufficient time to manage the procurement process (direct award or mini-competition) effectively
- ✓ Do endeavour to draft documentation sufficiently clearly and precisely to enable contractors to put forward their best offer without significant clarifications being necessary
- ✓ Where applicable, ensure your estate is surveyed properly before issuing documentation to contractors
- ✓ Consult colleagues in your respective areas for advice and guidance (and legal advisers if necessary)
- ✓ Ensure you have an exit strategy

- ✓ Consider inclusion of an optional extension in your call-off contract. A call-off contract cannot be extended at a later date, where an option to extend was not included in the original contract documentation
- ✓ Agree a single point of contact for your organisation
- ✓ Keep the process and documentation simple and auditable
- ✓ Keep mini competition documentation proportionate to the value/duration of the requirement
- ✓ Ensure evaluation criteria and weightings are detailed in your mini competition documentation
- ✓ When placing an order, you may wish to use the Requirements Template ([Order Form](#)) or complete the Standard Terms of Supply (Schedule 5), both contained within the Framework agreements via the Knowledge Hub. The Order Form is intended for smaller, lower value /low volume requirements via the Direct Award process
- ✓ Treat all contractors equitably and invite all contractors on the framework to mini-competitions
- ✓ Where applicable, consider the use of Quick Quote via Public Contracts Scotland (PCS), or Public Contracts Scotland –Tender (PCS-T) where possible/appropriate, to ensure a clear audit trail
- ✓ Allow adequate time for the contractor to respond to the mini competition
- ✓ Ensure you compare contractors equably from their mini competition submissions against the evaluation criteria
- ✓ Provide meaningful, constructive feedback to unsuccessful contractors. There is an obligation on all framework public bodies utilising these frameworks to provide timely, constructive feedback to the contractors, it is not acceptable to refuse to provide this. Debriefs are a key tenet of good procurement practice. Contractors will learn from your feedback and can consider improvements or revisions on their offering next time

Availability

The framework agreement is available for use by all Scottish public and third sector bodies.