



**Request for Tenders/Quotations for:
Water Forum – National Survey on Water Services:
Customer Awareness and Communication**

**Closing Date:
Wednesday 24th May 2023**

**Queries to be addressed to:
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Introduction

The Water Forum (An Fóram Uisce) was established on a statutory basis in June 2018, in accordance with the Water Services Act 2017 to facilitate stakeholder input to water policy development in Ireland. The Forum is the national statutory body representative of stakeholders with an interest in the quality of Ireland's water bodies, consisting of 25 members including representatives from a wide range of organisations with direct connection to issues relating to water quality and also public water consumers. The Forum has advisory roles in relation to the Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage, Irish Water, the Commission for Regulation of Utilities and the Water Policy Advisory Committee.

The Water Forum provides an opportunity for stakeholders to debate and analyse a range of issues with regard to water quality, rural water concerns, issues affecting customers of Uisce Éireann and the implementation of the Water Framework Directive and Ireland's River Basin Management Plan. The Forum has a statutory role under the Water Services Act 2017 of advising the Minister in relation to Government water policy having regard to interests of the customers of Uisce Éireann. As an independent entity, the Forum has discretion to determine its own work programme and means of communicating its views and analysis. The vision of the Water Forum is for clean and healthy waters, supporting biodiversity, community wellbeing and economic sustainability.

Further information on the work of the Water Forum is available at www.thewaterforum.ie

Requirements

The Water Forum is commissioning a national survey to determine views of public and private water consumers in relation to their awareness of water issues and opinions on communications with water service providers. The objective of the project is to measure key attributes in the above area and to develop performance indicators which can be tracked in subsequent research.

Research Audience

It is intended that a national survey will be developed to capture input from public and private water consumers.

The areas will be geographically spread across Ireland to include both rural and urban areas.

In all areas the selected sample should be representative of the local community.

Research Focus

A national survey to establish views of customer awareness of water issues, water conservation and opinions on communications with water service providers in terms of clarity, timeliness, efficiency, contact and overall experience.

The survey requirements are as follows:

- A national survey (1200-1500 people) – to address all water customers.
- Survey Themes should include:

(See Appendix A for examples of questions which will be discussed on award of tender)

- Water Quality
- Customer Communications
- Water Conservation

Programme and Timescale

This request for tender is to carry out the national survey for the Water Forum based on the above and to provide it with recommendations based in its findings.

The contract is for one year

- The report should be delivered to the Water Forum by 29 September 2023.
- Following the results of the initial survey, the Water Forum may require an additional repeat survey targeting Group Water Schemes, to be completed by December 2023.

Deliverables

- Preliminary meeting to develop survey questionnaire
- Electronic top line data.
- Electronic complete data.
- Debrief meeting post survey.
- Executive summary of debrief presentation.
- Electronic copy of executive summary.
- Attendance at Water Forum meetings as required.

Oversight

The Water Forum's Water Services Standing Committee (WSSC) will oversee this project. It is anticipated that the appointed contractor will engage in on-going consultation with the Forum Secretariat during the course of the work, and the WSSC if required.

Tender Application

Applications must be made using the Tender Response Document provided and must be saved in PDF.

Applications must be received via the Water Forum Secretariat at aisling@nationalwaterforum.ie by 5pm on Wednesday 24th May 2023.

Marking Scheme for Tender

Award Criteria	Total Marks
Criteria A: Relevant experience of application organisation and project team. <ul style="list-style-type: none">To include an Outline of company history and general experience. This should include organisational structure, staffing levels, current workload, etc.Details of three most recent projects similar in nature to the proposed project, including date completed, contracting authority and full reference contact details, which may be contacted if required.	400
Criteria B: Approach / Methodology to Project Delivery <ul style="list-style-type: none">Summary of the overall approach, outlining how you intend to carry out the assignment.	400
Criteria C: Total Price for the Project	200
TOTAL	1000 Marks

Methodology for Calculating Scoring of Award Criteria

Scoring Range	Description
90 - 100%	Excellent response with very few or no weaknesses and exceeds requirements, and provides comprehensive, detailed, and convincing assurance that the Tenderer will deliver to an excellent standard.
80% - 89%	A very good response that demonstrates real understanding and fully meets the requirements and significant assurance that the Tenderer will deliver to a very high standard.
70% - 79%	A good response that demonstrates appropriate understanding and fully meets the requirements and appropriate assurance that the Tenderer will deliver to high standard.
60% - 69%	A satisfactory response which demonstrates a reasonable understanding of requirements and gives reasonable assurance of delivery to an adequate standard.
Below 60%	Less than 60% is unacceptable and considered ineligible from further consideration.

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

Methodology for Calculating the Cost Score

Tenderers that have not achieved the required minimum qualifying marks for each of the qualitative award criteria will be eliminated without having their costs assessed and their proposed prices will not be considered for the purposes of calculating the cost score (as per the formula set out below) of the tenderers that have achieved the minimum qualifying marks.

The Tender that offers the lowest tender as per the Pricing Schedule will receive 100% of the maximum marks available for cost. All other Tenders will be scored using the following formula:

$$\text{Cost Score} = \frac{\text{Lowest Tendered Cost}}{\text{Tendered Cost under evaluation}} \times \text{Maximum Marks Available}$$

Team, Resources and Capacity

Tenderers must demonstrate that they have adequate resource capacity to deliver the work, and should have a proven track record in delivering and managing customer surveys. Details of the following are required:

- Overall structure of the proposed team.
- CVs of key individuals proposed for the assignment, together with the roles, responsibilities and reporting relationships.
- Declaration of any conflicts of interest as a result of participation in other projects.

Budget and Payment Schedule

The contract will be awarded on the basis of a fixed price and understanding of the project requirements.

No other amount over and above the negotiated contract amount will be paid to the appointed company.

Should additional ad hoc work be required, tenderers are also requested to provide a daily rate for each team member.

Copyright and Confidentiality

Copyright for any illustrations or other material used should be cleared by the contractor.

The Tenderer must state their unequivocal agreement that, if successful, the Tenderer will sign and abide by any confidentiality & Non-Disclosure agreements required by the Water Forum.

Tender Costs

Tenders/quotations are being sought under Public Procurement Guidelines, (Goods & Services) for below threshold tendering, where the contracts for goods and services will have an estimated value of between €5,000 and €25,000 (exclusive of VAT) which can be awarded on the basis of responses to written specifications (e.g., sent by email) to at least three suppliers or service providers.

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 Water Forum shall not be responsible or liable for any costs or expenses regardless of the conduct or outcome of the tender process.

Any tender with a maximum cost greater than €25,000 (ex. VAT) will be disqualified.

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.

Evaluation of Proposals

The awarding authority is the Water Forum.

The basis of award will be the tender with the best performance according to the requirements and experience criteria specified, while marks for price ensure value for money. The Water Forum 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 Water Forum reserves the right to terminate this tender exercise at any time prior to the signing of contracts.

Short-listing may apply and the Water Forum may, where considered appropriate, invite shortlisted tenderers to make a short presentation to outline previous relevant experience and understanding of services required.

Queries

Tenderers may raise queries to the Water Forum Secretariat at aisling@nationalwaterforum.ie. The following should be included in the subject line, *“Water Forum Water Services Customer Survey RFQ”*.

Tax Compliance

It will be a condition of any contract pursuant to this competition that the successful Tenderer(s) shall, for the term of such contract(s), comply with all EU and domestic tax laws. Tenderers are referred to www.revenue.ie for further information. Prior to the award of any Services Contract arising out of this competition the successful Tenderer shall be required to supply their Tax Clearance Access Number and Tax Reference Number to facilitate online verification of their tax status by the Department. By supplying these numbers, the successful Tenderer acknowledges and agrees that the Water Forum, or an entity it nominates, has the permission of the successful Tenderer to verify its tax cleared position.

Non-resident tenderers 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.

Appendix A

Examples of topics/questions which could be included in the national survey.

Do the public value water;

- Do you know where your tap water comes from?
- Do you know how and where the water is treated? Do you know if it is monitored for water quality.
- Do you have an understanding of any pressures that impact drinking water sources (e.g. chemicals, land use practices, etc)

What is the general understanding of roles and responsibilities of water providers;

- Who is your water service provider (Uisce Éireann, group water schemes, private well)
- Do you know who to contact if you have a query or complaint with your supplier re water quality, supply or leaks. Give details.
- What is the level of trust in your water service provider?
- If you own a private well, how often do you test your drinking water quality?

What is the level of satisfaction with water quality, supply and customer service;

- What is your level of satisfaction with regard to the quality and supply of your drinking water (e.g. taste, odour, colour, water pressure, disruptions, boil water notices)
- Have you experienced any issues with water supply or water quality. Give details.
- Did you contact your water provider? If yes, what was your experience with customer service.
- What level of engagement would you like with your water provider? e.g., communication around disruption to supply, explanation, follow up. What method of communication would be preferable.

Water Conservation

- Since 19% of the energy used in Irish homes is for heating water, have recent increases in energy prices impacted how you use water (Tick Box)?
 - Yes, I try to heat/use water less.
 - No, I still heat/use water the same as always.
 - No, I wasn't aware heating/using water effects my energy bills
- Do you have an understanding of pressures on water and additional risks from future climate change (give details)?
- Do you think Ireland has an unlimited supply of drinking water?

- Do you think Ireland is at risk of drought?
- What season do you think we use the most water in Ireland (Tick Box)?
 - (Spring, Summer, Autumn, Winter)
- Do you think there is enough information on how much water you use? Would more information on water use help you to manage your water use?
- Are you aware of the following water conservation technologies available (tick box)?
 - (Dual Flush Toilets, Leaky Loo Detectors, Low-Flush Toilet, Composting Toilet, Cistern Displacement Device, Tap Aerators, Tap Flow Regulator, Tap Pressure Regulator, Shower Timer, Low Flow Showerheads, Shower Pressure Regulator, Smart Showers/Showerheads, Water Efficient Washing Machine/Dishwasher, Rainwater Harvesting (Water Butts), Trigger Hose, Rainwater Gardens,)
- Which technologies would you consider using or are using already, give details?
- Reasons for not using water conservation technologies (tick box):
 - (Too expensive, Don't know where to start, it sounds complicated, too much effort, not interested in water conservation, other (specify))
- Are you aware that if there is a water leak within your household you can be using over 1000 Litres of water per day? (Yes/No)
- Have you had your household checked for leaks? (Yes/No)
- Are you aware if your supplier has a "First Fix For Free" initiative for fixing internal household leaks? (Yes/No)

Water Conservation - Smart Metering

A smart meter can give detailed information about your water usage (and leakage) throughout the day and night.

- Would you have a smart meter installed for water conservation purposes? i.e., to view your daily water usage/check for leaks/identify where you are using the most water? (Yes/No)
- Which method would you prefer to access water usage information (tick box)?
 - (mobile app, physical device in the home, website)
- Would you be willing to share your water usage information with your supplier so that they could
 - Identify any household leaks. (Yes/No)
 - Monitor water conservation initiatives and trends. (Yes/No)