



**GUIDANCE FOR SUPPLIERS  
RESPONDING TO TENDERS**

**VIA**

[www.etenders.gov.ie](http://www.etenders.gov.ie)

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## Introduction

Public Bodies, known as Contracting Authorities, operating in Ireland are subject to national and EU rules on the award of contracts for supplies, works and services.

They are obliged to publicly tender all requirements on the Irish Government website [www.etenders.gov.ie](http://www.etenders.gov.ie) over certain thresholds, in addition to advertising in the Official Journal of the European Union (OJEU) for larger value contracts.

The etenders website is the national system operated in Ireland. It is a fully electronic confidential tool supporting the advertising and tender transactions for all Irish Public Bodies as well as those in receipt of public funding.

There are essentially 7 categories of procurement methods:

- (i) **Quotations** – where the Contracting Authority has discretion over who to invite to submit a quotation – these may be issued by email or via the Quick Quotes tool on eTenders.
- (ii) **National Tenders** – where the Contracting Authority must advertise its requirements on the Irish Government website [www.etenders.gov.ie](http://www.etenders.gov.ie) and comply with strict rules and protocols on tendering.
- (iii) **EU Tenders** – where the Contracting Authority must advertise its requirements in the European Journal in addition to [www.etenders.gov.ie](http://www.etenders.gov.ie). The notice will also appear on the OJEU making it accessible to all EU Member States in addition to other countries signatory to various EU trade deals such as the European Economic Area and the Government Procurement Agreement of the World Trade Organisation. The official OJEU website is [www.ted.europa.eu](http://www.ted.europa.eu). The rules of EU tendering are defined by EU legislation, namely Directive 2014/24/EU as transposed into Irish law by Statutory Instrument 284 of 2016.

In addition to the 3 methods outlined above, Contracting Authorities may also

- (iv) Award contracts via **mini competitions** under Framework Agreements established by Central Purchasing Bodies such as the Office of Government Procurement or collaborative groups of organisations such as a number of Local Authorities operating together.
- (v) They may also use **framework agreements** set up by their own organisations.

In the case of mini competitions, these are not publicly visible, however the establishing framework would have been advertised on [www.etenders.gov.ie](http://www.etenders.gov.ie) / OJEU.

- (vi) The final method may involve the establishment of **Dynamic Purchasing Systems (DPS)** – these are lists of qualified economic operators. They are constantly open for access for economic operators to apply. The establishment is subject to public advertising; however, the contracts being awarded under the DPSs are not, and operate similar to a mini competition, whereby all members of the DPS are invited to tender.
- (vii) Establish **Panels** these are lists of qualified economic operators similar to a DPS. They are constantly open for access for economic operators to apply. The establishment is subject to public advertising; however, the contracts being awarded under the Panels are not. A panel is an open list with no limit to numbers who qualify, but the contracting authority may shortlist and invite a limited number to tender depending on the contract

value – the tender list would be identified using one or more of the following methods – rotation, random selection or application of specific criteria based on information already provided. These can only be set up for national value spend but could be used at OJEU level for Title III services only, due to the application of the Light Touch Regime.

In all of the above cases eTenders plays a major role, so it is important to ensure you register appropriately on the eTenders website.

The thresholds and obligations can be summarized as follows:

Mechanism	Supplies	Services	Works
Quotations	Less than €25,000 (excl. VAT)	Less than €25,000 (excl. VAT) Less than €50,000 (excl. VAT) for Work Related Services	Less than €50,000 (excl. VAT)
<b>National Tenders</b> – Central Government	Between €25,000 and €140,000	Between €25,000 and €140,000	Between €50,000 and €5,382,000
<b>National Tenders</b> – Local Authorities / Bodies Governed by Public Law	Between €25,000 and €215,000	Between €25,000 and €215,000 Between €50,000 & €215,000 for Work related Services	Between €50,000 and €5,382,000
<b>EU Tenders</b> – Central Government	Greater than €140,000	Greater than €140,000	Greater than €5,382,000
<b>EU Tenders</b> – Local Authorities / Bodies Governed by Public Law	Greater than €215,000	Greater than €215,000	Greater than €5,382,000
EU Tenders TITLE III Services*	n/a	Greater than €750,000	n/a
<b>EU Tenders</b> Concessions**	n/a	Greater than €5,382,000	Greater than €5,382,000

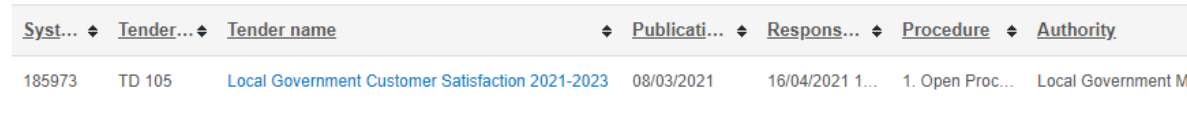
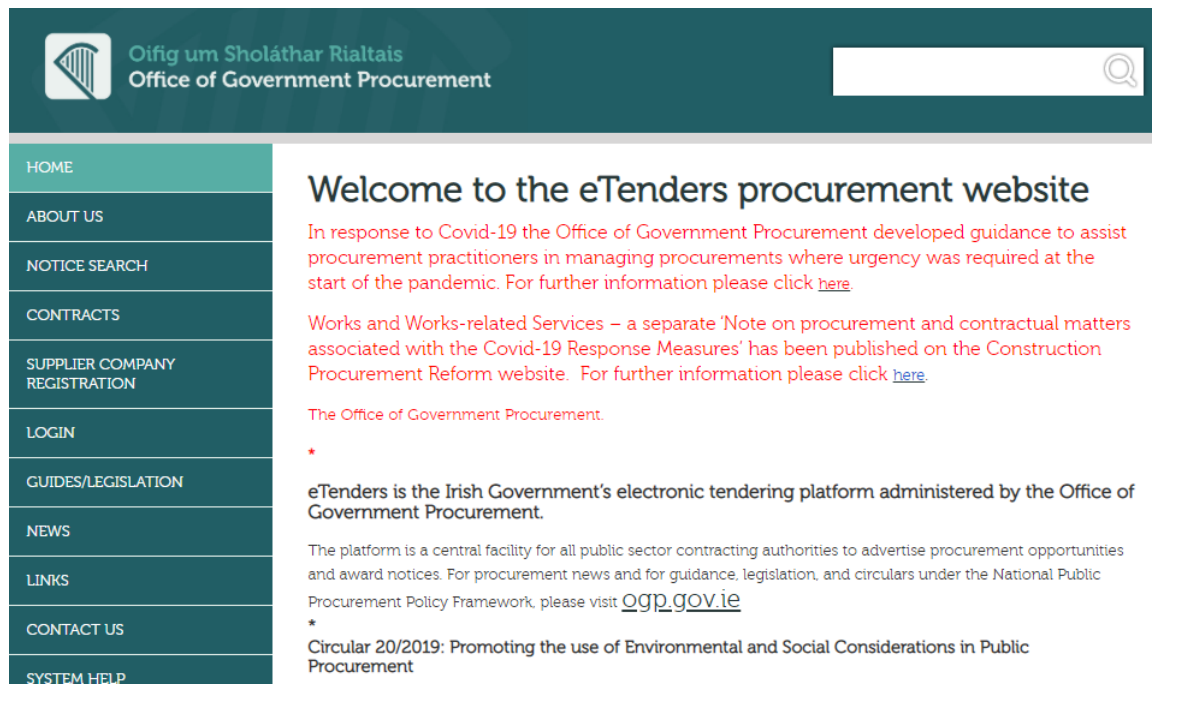
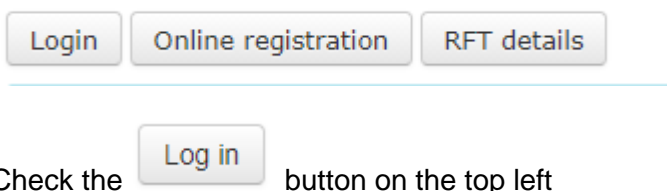

\*Title III Services as defined in the Directives include training and education, social and related services, catering and hotel services, security services, etc.


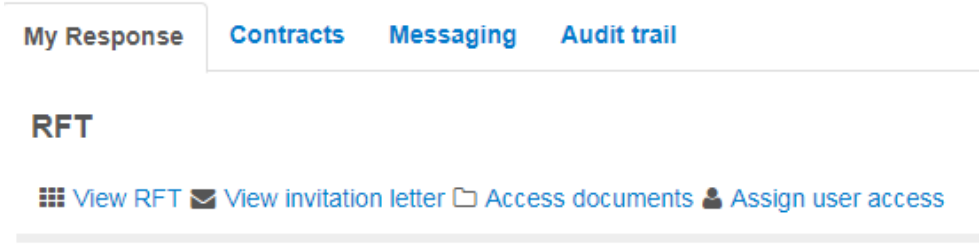
\*\*Concession Contracts are contracts based upon two fundamental aspects – remuneration and risk. The remuneration is paid for by those using the service / work and the risk (being a significant element of the risk involved) must be taken by the concessionaire. A typical service concession is a bank ATM machine or a coffee shop at a public building/facility. A typical works concession is a toll road.

This Guidance Document aims to explain the process involved for economic operators responding to quotations, tenders or mini-competitions via the [www.etenders.gov.ie](http://www.etenders.gov.ie) website.

## Guidance on Accessing eTenders

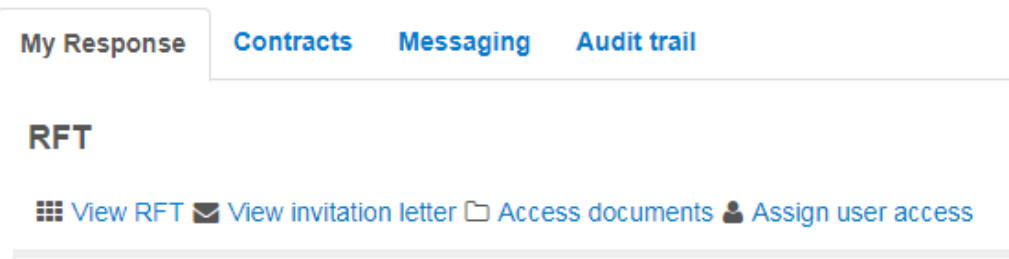
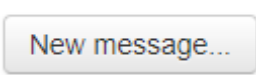
Log on to [www.etenders.gov.ie](http://www.etenders.gov.ie)

STEP	ACTION
<b>TO GET THE DOCUMENTS FROM WWW.ETENDERS.GOV.IE</b>	
<b>Step 1</b>	locate the competition under System ID number if known, or via email link from etenders or by searching by the Contracting Authority
 <p>This is accessed via the website Notice Search function</p> 	
<b>Step 2</b>	Click on the hyperlink under the Tender Name – <b>in the blue text</b>  <a href="#">Local Government Customer Satisfaction 2021-2023</a>
<b>Step 3</b>	 <p>Check the  button on the top left</p>

<b>Step 4</b>	Enter the username and password
<b>Step 5</b>	Click the  button on the top left
<b>Step 6</b>	Click on the Access Documents Section 
<b>Step 7</b>	Download all the documents – read carefully and ensure you comply with rules for tender submissions.

**Guidance on using Messaging / Question and Answer Facility**

**Note #1:** Please note that in public tenders, where questions are asked by tenderers, the

STEP	ACTION
<b>TO ASK QUESTIONS ON WWW.ETENDERS.GOV.IE</b>	
<b>Step 1</b>	Click on the Messaging Tab
	
<b>Step 2</b>	Click on the New Message button 
<b>Step 3</b>	Complete the message including subject, content and press Send.

answers, anonymised are issued to all interested parties.

## Guidance on Submitting the Formal Response

STEP	ACTION
<b>TO SUBMIT A TENDER RESPONSE ON WWW.ETENDERS.GOV.IE</b>	
<b>Step 1</b>	LOGIN
<b>Step 2</b>	On the <b>HOME</b> screen under My Request for Tenders, click on the Tender Competition using the blue hyperlinked text.
<b>Step 3</b>	<p>Step 3 Go to the <b>My Response Section</b> and respond to the sections as follows:</p> <div style="border: 1px solid #ccc; padding: 10px; margin: 10px 0;"> <p style="margin: 0;"> <span style="border: 1px solid #ccc; padding: 2px 5px;">My Response</span> <span style="margin-left: 10px; color: #0070c0;">Contracts</span> <span style="margin-left: 10px; color: #0070c0;">Messaging</span> <span style="margin-left: 10px; color: #0070c0;">Audit trail</span> </p> <p style="margin: 10px 0 0 0;"><b>RFT</b></p> <p style="margin: 0 0 0 20px;"> <span style="color: #0070c0;">☰ View RFT</span> <span style="color: #0070c0; margin-left: 10px;">✉ View invitation letter</span> <span style="color: #0070c0; margin-left: 10px;">📁 Access documents</span> <span style="color: #0070c0; margin-left: 10px;">👤 Assign user access</span> <span style="color: #0070c0; margin-left: 10px;">💬 Internal notes</span> </p> </div>
<b>Step 4</b>	<p><b>My Response</b></p> <p>There may be a requirement to complete an ESPD (European Single Procurement Document), if so, click on Manage ESPD Responses where you can create the ESPD from scratch, or import from a previously completed document in addition to exporting the one created for re-use again (remember where you save it to!!). The ESPD relates the requirement to self-declare certain financial, technical and exclusion related selection / suitability criteria. While it can be self-declared, the evidence will be required prior to decision to award / include on a tender list.</p> <div style="border: 1px solid #ccc; padding: 10px; margin: 10px 0;"> <p style="margin: 0;"><b>My response</b></p> <p style="margin: 0;"><u>ESPD</u></p> <hr style="border: 0.5px solid #ccc;"/> <p style="margin: 0;"> <span style="float: left;">Create ESPD response or select from ESPD response library</span> <span style="float: right; border: 1px solid #ccc; padding: 2px 10px; background-color: #f0f0f0;">Manage ESPD Responses</span> </p> </div>



If the RFT asks for Additional Response Documents –upload the response documents ensuring they are properly named under the **Attach Documents button**.

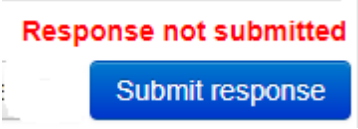
Make sure the documents are:

- Named with easily identifiable titles including organisation name;
- Indexed;
- Page numbered;

**Step 5**

The Percent Complete will turn green when documents are uploaded.

In the sample above, while it says 100% complete, it is still red. It will only go green when you click SUBMIT.

<b>Step 6</b>	<p>When you are ready to submit, press the blue Submit response button:</p> 
<b>Step 7</b>	<p>A request is made for the username and password again – this must be completed to fulfil the submission obligation.</p>
<b>Cancel/ Resubmit</b>	<p>If you need to withdraw, you can press the <b>Cancel expression of interest</b> button and always resubmit.</p>

**Note #1:** Please note that once uploaded it is possible to cancel the submission and re-upload if required, once the closing date and time has not passed.

**Note #2:** The maximum file size is 2.14Gb. There is no limit on the number of documents which can be uploaded in a tender response, unless limited by the instructions from the buyers.

**Note #3:** It is recommended to minimise the number of documents submitted where possible. Please ensure all documents are named correctly and logically so that the Contracting Authority can easily determine what the file contains.

**Note #4:** Please leave sufficient time to upload the documents taking account of the size / number of files to be uploaded, and the broadband speed and capacity in the local area.

It is possible to log in and practice uploading in advance.

- Don't press submit if practicing;
- Make sure to delete any test documents.

**Note#5:** Please note the system will time out after 1 hour, so if it is taking longer, save and exit and start again.

**Note#6:** If you run into difficulty, please contact the eTenders Helpdesk at 021 2439277 or email them at [etenders@eu-supply.com](mailto:etenders@eu-supply.com).