Invitation for expression of interest in the provision of ICT external support services

1. Context

The Irish Auditing and Accounting Supervisory Authority ('IAASA'/'the Authority') is the independent body in Ireland responsible for the:

- examination and enforcement of certain listed entities' periodic financial reporting;

- oversight of the Recognised Accountancy Bodies' functions in respect of statutory auditors and supervision of the regulatory functions of the Prescribed Accountancy Bodies;

- adoption of standards on auditing, professional ethics and internal quality control; and

- the inspection and promotion of improvements in the quality of auditing of Public Interest Entities.

IAASA currently has 26 staff that will grow to about 43 over the next 24 months. All staff require the ability to work remotely with 25% of staff doing so on a daily basis. IAASA's Corporate Services team is responsible for its ICT infrastructure. The team includes a dedicated ICT/Facilities Executive.

2. Nature of the service required

2.1. Service Required

The successful service provider will be required to provide on-site, remote and off-site support, maintenance, repair and where appropriate replacement of equipment listed in Appendix A. The successful service provider will also be required to provide advice and support in relation to ICT policies, standards & procedures; ICT asset management; ICT physical & environmental security; ICT access control; information systems acquisition & maintenance; information systems incident management and business continuity planning/disaster recover planning (BCP/DRP). The successful provider will be required to attend IAASA's office once a year for an annual review. All information technology infrastructure is located in the Authority's offices in Willow House, Millennium Park, Naas, Co Kildare.

2.2. Contract Timeframe

- There will be a one-month handover period where both the existing service provider and the new service provider will be engaged if so required.

- The contract for these services will be for an initial period of three years, with the option to extend the contract for a further three years at the Authority's sole discretion.

- IAASA reserves the right to terminate any agreement with the successful service provider and/or to retender for the services at any time.

2.3. Response Times

The response times for reported issues would depend on one of three levels of priority:

- P1: 0-1 hour (during business hours) for issues classified as High priority and an update every hour until the issue is resolved.

- P2: Within 4 hours (during business hours) for issues classified as Medium priority.

- P3: Within 8 hours (during business hours) for issues classified as Low priority.

	Whole Organisation	Up to 5 staff members
Major Disruption	P1 - High	P2 - Medium
Low Disruption	P2 - Medium	P3 - Low

The following would also be classified as a high priority (P1).

- Issues relating to breaches of regulations or laws.

- Issues that could affect the reputation of IAASA.

- Other issues specified by the Chief Executive or the Head of Finance & Administration

2.4. Escalation Procedures

The successful provider will be required to provide details of their escalation procedures, including contact names and telephone numbers in the event of faults or problems not being resolved satisfactorily and/or within the timescales agreed.

2.5. Maintenance of Equipment

- The contract will cover the service on all items of ICT equipment listed in Appendix A.

- At a minimum, the successful service provider will be required to install and update software from various sources and carry out server health checks in conjunction with server backup verification exercises.

- The service provider will also be expected to keep the configurations of both hardware and software under active review with the objective of increasing resilience, improving fault tolerance and reducing the risk of system degradation or failure.

- A defined procedure for software/firmware configuration changes must also be put in place. This will include full documentation of software/firmware changes.

- Normal maintenance of ICT equipment is included in the contract.

- More significant maintenance or repairs will be agreed prior to work commencing and will be invoiced separately at the quoted hourly or fixed cost rates plus parts.

- As a public body, IAASA may be required to purchase equipment, software, parts and consumables through public contracts. Otherwise, IAASA may purchase parts through the successful tenderer subject to the Authority's normal procurement procedures.

2.6. Security Requirements

The safe, secure and reliable functioning of IAASA's hardware and software is vital to the day-to-day conduct of its business. The successful service provider will work with IAASA to maintain the security of the server, network and laptops.

- All software used will be maintained and kept up-to-date. This includes the implementation of the most up to date security patches, service packs etc. issued by manufacturers.

- Reconfiguration work undertaken by the contractor must not compromise the security of the configurations.

- The successful service provider will conduct annual audits of the Authority's ICT equipment, network, etc. and provide a report with suggestions regarding ongoing security needs of IAASA.

- The successful service provider will be required to conduct these services in a confidential manner.

- Access to the IAASA network should be limited to the service providers authorised staff members.

- Access to the IAASA network should only occur when troubleshooting a logged issue or carrying out scheduled work. In the case of scheduled work, approval from a member of IAASA's staff must be obtained before any work can be carried out.

2.7. Level of Service

- Remote Support: The successful provider will need to be able to provide an application by which they can remotely connect to IAASA laptops and servers to diagnose and resolve issues. The tenderer must indicate whether this is adequate for their needs or otherwise detail how they would implement remote support.

- An annual meeting will take place in IAASA's offices in Naas to discuss the performance of the current ICT systems along with any issues that may relate to the levels of support being provided.

- While exceptional, out of office hours support may also be required from time to time and costs pertaining to this service should be listed separately.

- Onsite support may also be required from time to time and costs pertaining to this service should be listed separately.

- The successful tenderer will be required to assist and liaise with our internal and external auditors respectively in relation to any information technology issues that may arise.

3. Information requested and cost proposal

Should you consider that you possess the requisite expertise and experience to meet the Authority's requirements you are invited to provide the information set out hereunder:

A. name, business address, email address and telephone contact details;

B. an outline plan indicating the process for the delivery of the tendered service, detailing proposed service provisions and support levels;

C. an overview of previous relevant experience;

D. a cost proposal to include details of:

   a. any exclusions, such as cost of replacing equipment or consumables;

   b. additional costs, if any, arising from on-site and/or out of hours support; and

   c. other assumptions used in preparing the cost proposal, if any; and

E. a statement confirming that none of the circumstances set out in S. I. 329 of 2006 – European Communities (Award of Public Authorities' Contracts) Regulations 2006 apply to the respondent.

4. Conflicts of Interest

Persons for whom a conflict of interest, or in the Authority's opinion a perceived conflict of interest, would arise were they to undertake the role will be excluded from consideration. Respondents should declare, at first opportunity, any potential conflicts of interest arising.

5. Selection process

5.1. Assessment of response

IAASA will assess responses according to the criteria detailed in the table below to establish the most economically advantageous tender.

Criterion	Max score
Technical proposal *Marks will be awarded based on the information provided as detailed in section 4.B above.*	20
Relevant experience *Marks will be awarded in respect of relevant qualifications and experience held by respondents detailed in section 4.C above.*	30
Cost *A mark will be extrapolated for each respondent based on their proposed charges* vis-à-vis *other eligible respondents.*	40
Overall suitability for appointment *Marks will be awarded for considerations such as geographical location, specific regulatory entity experience, etc…*	10
TOTAL MARK AVAILABLE	**100**

5.2. Interview

The highest ranked respondent(s) shall be invited for interview. The purpose of the interview will be to:

- verify insofar as possible, and obtain any clarifications considered necessary regarding, assertions made by respondents in their initial submission;

- assess respondents' overall understanding of, and operational capacity to deliver on, IAASA's requirements;

- assess respondents' proposals to bring added-value to the engagements;

- respond to any clarifications sought by respondents.

6. Payment terms and conditions

6.1. All fees should be quoted in Euro, including VAT at the appropriate rate.

6.2. No additional fees, other than those originally quoted for the work when tendering for the project, shall be paid.

6.3. Payment will be made in accordance with the provisions of Statutory Instrument 850 of 2012 (EU (Late Payment of Commercial Transactions) Regulations).

6.4. The successful provider will be required to produce verification of current Tax Clearance status should payments exceed €10,000 in any 12 month period.

7. Respondents' costs and expenses

IAASA shall not be liable for any costs or expenses, howsoever incurred, by respondents in pursuing this invitation.

8. Confidentiality

Respondents should note that the service provider will be a professional adviser to the Authority, and shall thus be bound by the statutory obligations with respect to the confidentiality of information imposed by section 940 of the Companies Act 2014. The provider will be required to sign an acknowledgement that he/she is aware of the obligations imposed by section 940 and that any information that is obtained that has not otherwise come to the notice of members of the public shall not be disclosed except in accordance with law. In addition, successful respondents will be required to agree not to disclose any such information without the Authority's explicit consent.

A breach of section 940 is a category 2 offence under the Companies Act 2014 and may result in a fine and/or imprisonment.

9. **Other Information**
    9.1. The Authority shall be free to accept any or none of the proposals tendered.

    9.2. Intellectual content of any reports/documents produced shall become the sole property of the Authority.

    9.3. The tender response as submitted and this Invitation to Tender will form the basis of a contract of services to be agreed between the Authority and the successful respondent.

10. **Submission of tenders**

Tenders should be submitted by **9:00am, Monday 10 December 2018** to **submissions@iaasa.ie.** The subline should state: '*Tender – provision of ICT support services*'.

Tenders received after the above deadline will not be considered.

Appendix A – Equipment to be managed (as at the 16th Nov 2018)

A. Physical Servers (3):
    a. Dell PowerEdge R730, R630 & R720
    b. Windows Server 2016 running Hyper V.

B. Virtual Servers (5):
    a. Domain Controller 1 – Server 2008 R2
    b. Domain Controller 2 – Server 2016
    c. Exchange – Server 2016
    d. Application – Server 2012
    e. Windows Terminal Server – Server 2018 R2

C. Laptops (26):
    a. All Laptops run Windows 10 and are under 4 years old.
    b. All machines are domain joined and managed.
    c. All users connect to Windows Terminal Server from their local machines.
    d. Portion of staff (6-10) work remotely.
    e. Local install of Office 2016.
    f. All laptops are encrypted using Bitlocker
    g. *Number of laptops will increase with staff levels.*

D. Network:
    a. 5 x IAASA Networks (Staff LAN, Management LAN, Backup Net, Staff Wifi & Guest Wifi)
    b. Sonicwall TZ500
    c. HP 48G Switch
    d. 2 X Dell X1052P switches
    e. 2 X Dell SonicPoint Ni wireless access points
    f. 2 X SonicPoint ACe wireless access points
    g. Eir Leased Line & Eir ADSL Broadband

E. Backup:
    a. Local NAS using - StorageCraft ShadowProtect

F. Security:
    a. Laptops and servers locally protected with Webroot and Symantec.
    b. Email Scanning by TopSec (external service provider).
    c. Internet Firewall Secured by Sonicwall.
    d. Wi-Fi protected by Key, MAC address policy on the firewall for staff Wi-Fi