



Department of Public Expenditure & Reform

## Notebook Framework

### Framework for the Supply of Notebook Computers with Varying Operating System Builds And Associated Products & Services

# Buyer's Guide

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This Buyer's Guide is available online at <http://ictprocurement.gov.ie/>

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## About This Document

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<b>Purpose</b>	<p>The most current information about the Notebook Framework is found on the website <a href="http://ictprocurement.gov.ie/">http://ictprocurement.gov.ie/</a></p> <p>This document is a mirror of that information to enable the information to be used Off-line.</p> <p>The information in this document is current as at the date on its cover. It will, however, continue to be updated as the Notebook Framework evolves.</p>
<b>Target Audience</b>	<p>The primary audience is non-commercial public sector agencies who wish to know about the Notebook Framework and consider how it could benefit their agency.</p>
<b>Related Docs</b>	<p>A number of "Packs" containing documents associated with this Buyer's Guide, namely:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Pack 1 – RFQs: contains Request for Quote Templates.</li><li>• Pack 2 – Notebook Framework Price Lists.</li><li>• Pack 3 – Vendor Participation Agreement.</li></ul>
<b>Feedback</b>	<p>We welcome feedback on this document. Please send any comments or corrections to <a href="mailto:ictframeworks@gov.ie">ictframeworks@gov.ie</a> with the words Notebook Buyer's Guide in the subject line.</p>

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## Glossary

Words in this document have the following meaning:

1. **Notebook Framework** is the multi-vendor Framework for the provision of Notebooks and Associated Products and Services established on foot of the tender published in the Official Journal of the European Communities on the 03/06/2009 (OJEC reference OJ 2009/S106-153287 of 05-06-2009).
2. **Contract Manager** is an individual or organisation that may be appointed by the Department of Public Expenditure & Reform to take responsibility for maintaining the smooth, efficient and viable operation of the Framework. Where no such Contract Manager is appointed any reference to a Contract Manager herein shall be taken as meaning the Department of Public Expenditure & Reform.
3. **Customer** is a public or civil service body or non-commercial state agency that has elected to participate in the Framework.
4. **Vendor** is a company, consortium or other entity that has successfully tendered to participate in the Framework.
5. **Associated Product** is a consumable or a device or item that may be purchased either with Notebooks or separately.
6. **Associated Service** is a service that is related to the provision of Notebooks and associated products and may include, inter alia, product delivery, deployment, configuration, repair, etc.
7. **Contract** is any agreement or arrangement between parties to the Framework that relates to the supply of products or services through the Framework.
8. A **Mini Competition** is a process whereby all VENDORS in the Framework, and only the VENDORS in the Framework, are invited to bid for the supply of services or products through the Framework.

## 1. ABOUT IT

### 1.1. At a Glance

<b>A short overview of the Notebook Framework is tabled below.</b>	
<b>Framework:</b>	Supply of Notebooks plus Associated Products & Associated Services.
<b>Term:</b>	Effective from 8th December 2009 to 7th December 2012 (with option to extend by 1 year).
<b>Use:</b>	All non-commercial public sector bodies automatically enrolled.
<b>Products &amp; Services:</b>	Notebooks and Associated Products & Associated Services.
<b>Qualified Vendors:</b>	Dell, HP, Lenovo, PC Peripherals, Toshiba.
<b>Buying Method:</b>	Must run a mini-competition, i.e. request a quote from all five qualified vendors.
<b>Prices:</b>	Price lists online, regular price revisions, lowest price guarantee.
<b>Contract Manager:</b>	<a href="mailto:ictframeworks@gov.ie">ictframeworks@gov.ie</a> , (01) 604 5106.

### 1.2. Overview

#### New National Framework for Notebooks

The Department of Public Expenditure & Reform has established a framework for the supply of Notebooks plus associated products and associated services.

From 8<sup>th</sup> December 2009, the Notebooks Framework can be used by agencies from the non-commercial public sector to acquire, following a mini-competition process, a range of Notebooks, and associated products and associated services.

#### Background

The ICT Frameworks Steering Group is chaired by the Department of Public Expenditure & Reform and comprises representatives from various sectors of the non-commercial public sector. The group is responsible for devising and implementing aggregated procurement of ICT Products and Services through the use of frameworks.

The group identified the purchase of Notebooks and associated products and associated services by the public sector as one of those markets where economies could be achieved. Accordingly, and under the strategic direction of the Group, the Department of Public Expenditure & Reform undertook to establish a Framework for the Supply of Notebooks

and Associated Products and Associated Services on behalf of the Irish non-commercial Public Sector.

This Framework agreement is intended to maximise volume discounts and provide for reductions in administrative and transaction costs for suppliers and public sector purchasers. It is intended that there will be a robust contract management process which will in particular focus on price to ensure that reductions are being achieved and that the Framework is delivering overall value for money.

#### Duration of the Framework

The framework is for a period of three years:

**8<sup>th</sup> December 2009 to 7<sup>th</sup> December 2012**

The framework can be extended by a further one (1) year at the sole discretion of the Department of Public Expenditure & Reform in conjunction with the group.

#### Customer Participation

Non-commercial public sector bodies that are eligible to use these arrangements include:

- Central Government Departments, Offices and non-commercial agencies and organisations which have a formal reporting and legal relationship with these Departments;
- Local authorities in Ireland including urban and district councils; regional assemblies; county enterprise boards; and, libraries;
- The Irish Health Sector including the Department of Health and Children, the Health Information and Quality Authority (HIQA), the Health Services Executive (HSE) and all public sector organisations under their aegis;
- Department of Education and associated agencies and organisations; third level institutions (Universities, Institutes of Technology); VEC schools, primary and secondary schools;
- Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform and agencies and organisations which have a formal reporting and legal relationship with the Department;
- Department of Defence agencies and organisations which have a formal reporting and legal relationship with the Department;

All such bodies should be considered as automatically enrolled as participants (customers) in the Framework.

The procurement of products or services and the timing of same will be at the discretion of each individual public body. No obligation will exist on customers to purchase any quantity of any product or service under the Framework.

All civil and public service bodies are required to use this framework. Where a body feels that it cannot comply with such usage, its Accounting Officer must submit a request for derogation to the Department of Public Expenditure & Reform and a proposal detailing clearly why compliance is not possible, what the organisation proposes to do instead, and how the organisation will ensure compliance in the future. The organisation may only proceed with its proposal once derogation has been granted. If the Department of Public Expenditure & Reform approves the derogation, it may vary the organisation's proposal as part of that approval.

### Scope of Products and Services

This framework covers the supply of Notebooks, Associated Products and Associated Services:

Product or Service	Definition
<b>Products</b>	Notebook Computers
<b>Associated Products</b>	Associated products related to the notebooks purchased such as additional batteries, carry cases, USB memory keys, RAM etc.
<b>Associated Services</b>	Associated services related to the purchase of Notebooks, such as unpack and remove, disposal, installation, asset tracking, buy-back or trade in, etc.

### Participating Vendors and Contact Details

The following 5 vendors have been selected to participate in the Notebook framework:

Vendor	Contact Name	Phone Number	Email
<b>Toshiba</b>	Oliver Carey	087 2640204	<a href="mailto:Janice.Robertson@toshiba.ie">Janice.Robertson@toshiba.ie</a>
<b>Lenovo</b>	Brian Dalton	087 624 6280	<a href="mailto:lenfr@ie.lenovo.com">lenfr@ie.lenovo.com</a>
<b>HP</b>	Ann Marie O'Connell	(01) 615 8419	<a href="mailto:irlpublicsector@hp.com">irlpublicsector@hp.com</a>
<b>P.C Peripherals</b>	Martin Byrne	(01) 291 7910	<a href="mailto:martin.byrne@pcp.ie">martin.byrne@pcp.ie</a>
<b>Dell</b>	Public Sector Team	1850 403 103	<a href="mailto:iedub_public_contracts@dell.com">iedub_public_contracts@dell.com</a>

### Buying Services and Products

To buy products or services through the framework, a Customer must seek a quote from each of the 6 vendors – this process is called a mini-competition.

Public Bodies will need to carefully assess their own needs and set out their requirements in the mini-competition to select a suitable vendor.

Request for Quote (RFQ) templates have been developed which set out each of the main headings of the products or services available under which you can specify your particular requirements. It will be important to provide sufficient information for the vendors to come back with meaningful quotes that will allow you to evaluate them accordingly to the nature and scope of products or services you require.

### RFQ Email Address

RFQs must at all times be issued to each of the 6 vendors by sending an e-mail to:

**notebookframework@gov.ie**

This is a mailing group established by the Department of Public Expenditure & Reform to simplify the procurement process.

### Payment/Invoicing

Payment and Invoicing arrangements will be agreed by the relevant Customer and the selected Vendor in each case.

### Contracting Authority

The Contracting Authority establishing this Framework was the Department of Public Expenditure & Reform. The Contracting Authority has ensured that the framework has been established in full compliance with [EU Directive 2004/18/EC](#) (as implemented by SI 329 of 2006) and relevant EU and National Laws.

### Contract Manager

A Contract Manager has been appointed by the Department of Public Expenditure & Reform. Information and advice is provided to the customers and vendors on the operation of the framework through this service as well as mechanisms for the resolution, and where necessary, the escalation of disputes.

The Contract Manager can be contacted at:

**ICT Frameworks Team**  
**CMOD**  
**Department of Public Expenditure & Reform**  
**7<sup>th</sup> Floor Lansdowne House**  
**Lansdowne Road**



**Dublin 4**  
[ictframeworks@gov.ie](mailto:ictframeworks@gov.ie)  
**(01) 604 5106**

### *Download Flyer*

A summary of the information about the Notebook Framework Agreement contained in this website is available as a separate document.

### *Feedback and Corrections*

Please send any feedback, comments or corrections in relation to the Notebook Framework information contained herein to [ictframeworks@gov.ie](mailto:ictframeworks@gov.ie).

## **1.3. Features**

The framework delivers significant savings with lowest price guarantee and reduced procurement costs.

The major features of the framework are:

- Lowest price guarantee
- Cost effective procurement process for agencies
- Public Service Terms and Conditions
- Centralised contract management and monitoring of vendor performance

### *Lowest Price Guarantee*

Vendors have guaranteed that the price of any product or service included in price lists published through the Framework will be, at the time of publication, equal to or less than lowest price available to any Irish public or civil service body or state agency. Agencies may still negotiate further discounts with Vendors particularly when committing to very high euro value purchases of products and services.

In addition, Vendors have guaranteed that the price of any item or service included in a response to any given Request for Quotation submitted by a Customer of the Framework will be, at the time that response is submitted, equal to or less than lowest price available to any Irish public or civil service body or state agency.

### *Cost Effective Procurement Process for Agencies*

Agencies can use this legally compliant framework agreement, which was developed under EU public procurement regulations, to "fast track" purchases saving time and

effort. The introduction of standardised product categories across all vendors and the use of this website mean that Agencies can quickly compare pricing from various vendors. Agencies can purchase goods and services without having to conduct a full EU procurement process; instead, they can simply run a mini competition using the RFQ templates provided.

#### Public Service Terms and Conditions

The head agreement, Vendor Participation Agreement (VPA), stipulates the Public Service terms and conditions under which the vendors now have to supply their products and services.

#### Centralised Contract Management and Monitoring of Vendor Performance

The Contract Manager will work with Agencies to assist in the implementation of the Framework. The Contract Manager will continually monitor the adherence of vendors to contract conditions and service levels. This will also include a process where Agencies can escalate issues to the Contract Manager for resolution. Customers can be confident that vendors offer quality and reliability, and vendors are monitored to ensure they continue to provide high quality products and high levels of service.

### 1.4. Framework Rules

**IMPORTANT: By initiating a purchase or otherwise using or accepting the services provided through the Notebook Framework, you (the Customer) agree to adhere to Framework Rules and all other Customer obligations as set out here.**

The aim of the procurement legislation is to ensure that competition between framework vendors remains fair and open at all times. The core principles of procurement apply:

- Equality
- Non-discrimination
- Transparency
- Proportionality
- Mutual Recognition

The first thing to note is that you are free to use the framework or not at your discretion, though if you want to procure Notebooks outside the framework, you are subject to the usual national and EU procurement rules and guidelines.

By using this framework as outlined (including mini competitions) you are fully compliant with all the tendering requirements under EU and national legislation.

If you do chose to use the framework then the following rules apply:

**1. You must treat all of the vendors fairly and equally.**

This means that when you want to acquire products or services through the framework you must specify your requirements in a non-discriminatory way and solicit a quote from all 6 vendors.

**2. You must allow the vendors sufficient time to respond to your RFQ.**

RFQs can vary significantly in complexity, and you must allow the vendors a reasonable amount of time to submit a response. While the provisions on frameworks do not prescribe a minimum time limit for mini-competitions, the complexity, scope and urgency of the particular assignment should be borne in mind when setting the closing date for quotes.

If your requirement is complex and/or likely to require any clarification, you should set aside a period for vendors to ask questions during the mini competition and for answers to be prepared and issued to all vendors, but with the identity of the questioner withheld. Do not underestimate the time needed: even relatively straightforward projects may need extensive clarification on points of detail once the vendors have seen the documents.

For a simple mini-competition (e.g. buying 10 standard category Notebooks with no variation in the spec or additional services), a minimum of 3 full working days is recommended. More complex mini-competitions (e.g. drawdown agreements) should be given at least 2 to 3 full working weeks. Deadlines should be clearly stated in the RFQ and strictly applied.

**3. You must be open and transparent with regard to how you will select the winning quote.**

When requesting quotes from vendors you should state the criteria you will apply to select the winner. Simple purchases will normally be judged on Cost and where no criteria are specified this will be understood to be the case.

The following evaluation criteria may be applied (listed in no particular order):

- Cost
- Suitability for intended use
- References attesting to the quality of products and services
- Excess over Specification
- Delivery conditions
- Special Requirements

The above criteria can be weighted and clarified with sub-headings (e.g. Cost could include the subheadings Unit Cost, Installation and Delivery; Cost/Performance; Total Cost of Ownership, etc.) according to the requirements of the Customer for each mini-competition. However, it is important to specify how the criteria will be weighted when issuing a RFQ to ensure transparency.

Customers may define "Special Requirements" pertaining to any order placed through the Framework. A Special Requirement is any requirement relating to the fulfilment of an order or the successful or appropriate operation or execution of the services or products being the subject of the order and which cannot be reasonably anticipated at the time of electing to participate in the Framework.

The Customer conducting the Mini Competition will not be bound to accept the lowest priced or any proposal it receives.

#### **4. Avoid unfairly restrictive requirements.**

Care must be taken to avoid using any requirements in the mini competition that are unfairly restrictive. For example, stipulating an unreasonable level of past experience in a particular area might disqualify many capable vendors who have relevant experience that is sound but in other fields.

All framework vendors have been evaluated for their capability to provide a range of high quality products and services to the public sector. Similarly, emphasising a specific technology rather than taking a functional approach will disadvantage those who might be able to offer alternatives which can provide equal or better value for money.

**Restricting competition unfairly** not only leads to less choice, but may attract **legal challenges** from vendors who feel they have been unfairly excluded from the competition.

### **1.5. Duration**

The framework is for a period of 3 years:

**8<sup>th</sup> December 2009 to 7<sup>th</sup> December 2012.**

The framework can be extended by a further one (1) year at the sole discretion of the Department of Public Expenditure & Reform in conjunction with the ICT Frameworks Steering Group.

### **1.6. Products and Services**

The Products and Services available under the Notebook framework are:

#### *Notebook Computers*

The Notebook Framework covers the supply of any specification of Notebook from the 6 qualified Vendors' commercial ranges - excluding pcs, servers, workstations, thin-clients or any product that is not a Notebook. Each Vendor has an agreed range of products that are aimed at satisfying any Notebook requirement, from low-end machines to high-end developer. We have specified standard configurations for several Notebook categories

with the aim of making it easier to buy those types of products, but you are free to specify your own configurations to suit your needs.

### **Associated Products**

Associated products are those which are used in conjunction with the Notebooks such as additional batteries, external drives, RAM, USB keys, etc. Customers may specify their particular requirements in any mini-competition Associated Services

### **Associated Services**

Associated services are services related to the purchase of Notebooks and include unpack and remove, disposal, installation, asset tracking, buy-back or trade in etc.

Some of these services should be discussed with the Contract Manager before being requested in a mini-competition or ordered as part of an existing drawdown facility as they will need to be tailored to the requesting Customer's requirements.

## **1.7. Terms and Conditions**

The head agreement - the **Vendor Participation Agreement (VPA)** - stipulates the Public Service Terms and Conditions under which the Vendors have to supply their products and services.

A VPA was concluded between each Vendor and the Department of Public Expenditure & Reform.

The VPA imposes certain product quality and service level commitments on the vendors:

- Price promise
- Specification promise
- Delivery promise
- Indemnity against 3rd party
- Copyright infringements
- Responsibility for resellers
- Others relating to management of the agreement, e.g. information returns

It defines award criteria that the customer can use to evaluate responses:

- Cost
- Suitability for intended use
- References attesting to the quality of products and services

- Excess over minimum specification
- Delivery conditions
- Special Requirements

Criteria can have weights assigned and can be clarified to greater detail. Criteria can also be used to set minimum qualifications, e.g. Vendor must have completed x similar orders over the past x years.

It allows for sanctions to be imposed on vendors, e.g. Delayed delivery. Others relate to participation and quality issues and mainly involve suspension.

### VPA Sections

The VPA comprises the following schedules:

- S1. DEFINITION OF TERMS
- S2. GENERAL TERMS
- S3. PARTICIPATION
- S4. CATALOGUE MANAGEMENT
- S5. ORDERING MECHANISMS
- S6. AWARD CRITERIA
- S7. ORDER FULLFILMENT
- S8. PRODUCT CATEGORIES AND SPECIFICATIONS
- S9. PRICE CALCULATION
- S10. DISPUTE RESOLUTION
- S11. SANCTIONS

A “Pack” containing all of the VPA schedules is available from the Contract Manager on request. Please send your request to [ictframeworks@gov.ie](mailto:ictframeworks@gov.ie) with the words **VPA Pack** in the subject line.

### Amendment to the VPA

An amendment to the VPA is available as part of the VPA Pack.

### Additional Terms and Conditions

Additional Terms and Conditions may be agreed by the Vendor and the Customer at the Contract Negotiation phase arising out of either a mini-competition or draw-down exercise.

## 2. USING IT

### 2.1. Purchasing Mechanisms

To buy Notebooks, Associated Products and Associated Services under this Framework, a Customer must first request a quote from all of the six qualified Vendors – this process is called a Mini-Competition.

A Request for Quote (RFQ) template is available to assist customers in running a Mini-competition.

The Framework provides a number of purchasing mechanisms, including:

#### **Mini-Competition**

This is where the Customer contacts each of the Vendors - using the e-mail address listed below - with their requirements, the closing date, and the award criteria to be used and collates the responses themselves.

**RFQs must be e-mailed to [Notebookframework@gov.ie](mailto:Notebookframework@gov.ie) (vendor group address).**

RFQ Templates are available to assist customers in running a Mini-competition.

#### **Drawdown Agreement**

This is where - following a mini competition - the Customer establishes an agreement with one of the participating vendors for the supply of products and/or services through the Framework for a particular period of time.

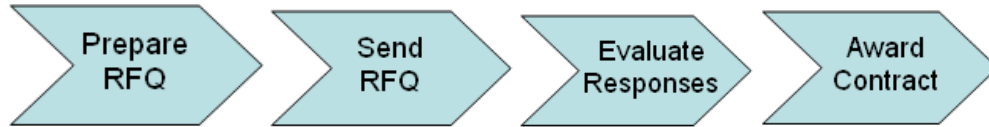
A Drawdown Agreement RFQ template is available to assist customers in putting a drawdown in place.

#### **Direct Purchase**

Purchases of Notebooks from a Vendor, without running a mini-competition, are only allowed off a Drawdown Agreement concluded under the Framework (which will itself have been concluded on foot of a mini competition). Under limited circumstances direct purchases of Associated Products and Associated Services is permitted from a Vendor with whom a current Contract, set up through the Framework, is in place.

### 2.2. Mini-competition

Running a mini competition involves the following 4 steps:



Customers will need to carefully assess their own needs and set out their requirements in the RFQ to select a suitable provider.

There are a wide variety of Notebooks available from the Vendors under the framework. It is imperative that each Customer perform detailed analysis and gain a thorough understanding of their requirements and budget in order to assist them in making the correct decision as to which Vendor to select.

### **Step 1 in running a mini competition:**

In order to ensure that competition between framework vendors remains fair and open at all times, it is imperative that Customers rigidly adhere to the Framework Rules.

The RFQ should specify a fixed time limit for receipt of quotes. Such time limit should be of sufficient duration to allow quotes to be submitted, taking into account factors such as the complexity of the requirements and the time needed to compile and submit a quote. For a simple mini-competition, a minimum of 3 full working days is recommended. More complex mini-competitions should be given at least 2 to 3 full working weeks.

The RFQ will address the following areas:

- Detailed account of the products and services to be provided
- Any constraints applicable to the project
- The procurement process and key dates
- Evaluation award criteria
- Instructions on how the vendor should respond to the RFQ
- A date by which you expect a response; we suggest that you allow sufficient time for vendors to absorb and respond to your information.

### **Applying Framework Award Criteria**

The following evaluation criteria may be applied (listed in no particular order):

- Cost
- Suitability for Intended use
- References attesting to the quality of products and services
- Delivery Conditions



- Excess over minimum specification
- Special Requirements

The above criteria can be weighted according to the requirements of the Customer for each mini-competition. However, it is important to specify how the criteria will be weighted when issuing a RFQ to ensure transparency.

Customers may define "Special Requirements" pertaining to any order placed through the Framework. A Special Requirement is any requirement relating to the fulfilment of an order or the successful or appropriate operation or execution of the services or products being the subject of the order and which cannot be reasonably anticipated at the time of electing to participate in the Framework.

The Customer conducting the Mini Competition will not be bound to accept the lowest priced or any proposal it receives.

A document providing detailed guidance on Applying Award Criteria is available to assist customers in running mini-competitions is available on request.

**RFQ Templates**

Standard documents have been produced by the Contract Manager as best practice guidance. They cover the minimum information that a Customer needs to incorporate as part of its mini-competition.

Customers are not mandated to utilise this documentation in order to access this framework agreement. A standardised approach to industry, however, helps to reduce administration costs for all parties, ensure consistency and remove duplication of effort.

Options	Format	Sample
Buying Standard Category Notebooks	Email RFQ	Available on request
Buying Standard Category Notebooks with Variations	Email RFQ	Available on request
Buying Non Standard Notebooks	Document RFQ	Available on request
Setting up a Drawdown Agreement	Document RFQ	Available on request

**Step 2 in running a mini competition:**

Customers must email an RFQ to all 6 vendors to the Notebook Vendors' group email address:

**RFQs must be e-mailed to [Notebookframework@gov.ie](mailto:Notebookframework@gov.ie) (mailing address which will reach all 6 qualified vendors).**

It is important to make sure that all of the vendors actually receive the RFQ, for example by using delivery and read receipts for email correspondence.

**Step 3: Evaluate Responses**

This step involves the following tasks:

- formally opening quotes properly received;
- checking quotes for essential compliance and eliminating those that fail to comply;
- evaluating qualifying quotes against award criteria to identify the preferred bidder.

When evaluating responses, Customers should:

- ensure fair and equal treatment of all bidders
- make the evaluation methodology transparent
- keep records confidential, secure and auditable
- be aware that disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act (FOI) may be requested and granted.

**Ensure fair and equal treatment of all bidders**

As always, take care not to discriminate unfairly between bidders and to ensure fair and equal treatment at all times.

Unsuccessful bidders will want to know why they failed, and may use their rights under the Freedom of Information Act (FOI) to ask for copies of the evaluation documents.

**Make the evaluation methodology transparent**

It is good practice to ensure that those competing understand the key criteria against which their bid will be assessed and the respective weightings for each category, where relevant.

**Keep records confidential, secure and auditable**

Pay attention to commercial confidentiality regarding the evaluation processes and the

records of these, and ensure that the records are retained in a secure but accessible location to allow for any future examination by independent auditors or any response required to enquiries under FOI.

#### **Step 4: Award Contract**

To award a contract you will need to:

- select the most economically advantageous tender
- notify the successful vendor
- debrief unsuccessful vendors
- set aside a "standstill" period
- award the contract.

#### **Select the most economically advantageous tender**

EU regulations state that the contracting authority shall "award each contract to the economic operator which has submitted the best tender on the basis of the award criteria specified in the contract documents based on the framework agreement". This means that you can select the quote which gives you the *best long-term value for money*, which may not necessarily be the cheapest option, but the award must be consistent with the criteria and weightings you have used.

#### **Notify the successful vendor and the unsuccessful vendors**

You will need to:

- notify your successful vendor formally
- notify your unsuccessful vendors formally

#### **Debrief unsuccessful vendors**

The unsuccessful vendors will want to understand why their bid was not accepted. Providing good levels of information helps encourage competition and allows the vendors to correct and improve their performance in any areas in which they were unsatisfactory.

The feedback does not necessarily have to be a formal session but should outline some of the main areas evaluated and responses concluded from the evaluation process. All comments should address the reasons why the vendors were successful or unsuccessful.

You should allow a reasonable amount of time for this process.

#### **Set aside a brief "standstill" period before awarding the contract**

Although not strictly mandatory under procurement law, it is best practice to observe a "standstill period" between the time a decision is taken and the time a contract is put in place.

The "standstill" period is to allow any of the unsuccessful bidders to submit queries or requests for clarifications.

A sufficient time period should be allowed as appropriate to the complexity of the contract, 2 days minimum for small straightforward contracts and 1 week minimum for large and complex contracts (e.g. large drawdown agreements).

### **Award the Contract**

Once the "standstill" period has passed, you will need to agree the terms of the contract by:

- receiving a formal acceptance of your order from the successful vendor
- establishing a payment mechanism.

## **2.3. Drawdown Agreement**

Drawdown Agreements are suitable if you need to buy frequently or you if you need a degree of certainty regarding the products you buy over a period of time.

Drawdown agreements can only be established on foot of a mini competition among the five qualified vendors.

Once a Customer has completed a drawdown agreement with a vendor through a mini-competition, the Customer may purchase Products and/or Services from that vendor without recourse to a mini-competition.

**A Drawdown Agreement RFQ template is available to assist customers in putting a drawdown in place.**

To get quotes for a Drawdown Agreement you e-mail the Vendors in the normal way, as per the example below.

Drawdowns are generally concluded on the basis of a (more or less) fixed price for the duration of the agreement. That means you will start out with a very good price in comparison to what's available on the market but over time that monetary difference will reduce – you may even finish the agreement at a higher price than is generally available. The key is to balance the initial monetary value and the savings to be gained from having a single supplier against the lower monetary value at the end of the agreement. If you're buying frequently or rely on standardised products (for imaging for example) then the savings from having one supplier can be substantial and will sometimes tip the balance in favour of a Drawdown Agreement.

**The maximum duration of a Drawdown Agreement under the Frameworks is 18 months** – normally expressed as “12 months with an option to extend by a further 6”.

**Email Application - New Email**

To	Notebookframework@gov.ie
Subject	Notebook Framework – Request for Quote
	<b>Attached: RFQ.doc</b>

Dear Vendor,

Please quote for a drawdown agreement under the Notebook Framework.

Details of the required specification and other items are included in the attached Request for Quote.

The closing date for submissions is 5pm on Monday the 31<sup>st</sup> of March 2008.

The anticipated award date is Friday the 18<sup>th</sup> of April 2008.

Kind Regards  
Customer

## 2.4 Direct Purchases

This is where a Customer purchases directly from a Vendor without running a mini-competition. Direct purchases are only allowed for:

1. Purchases of Notebooks off a **Drawdown Agreement** concluded under the Framework (which will itself have been concluded on foot of a mini competition).
2. Under limited circumstances, purchases of **Associated Products (RAM, external drives, USB keys etc)** and **Associated Services** (installation, Repair, Imaging etc) from a Vendor with whom a current Contract, set up through the Framework, is in place.

### 3. PRODUCTS

#### 3.1. Buying Options

**When it comes to buying Notebooks, Customers have three options available -**

- 1. Define your own spec,**
- 2. Use the standard catalogue spec, or**
- 3. Use a variant of the standard catalogue**

**and then get quotes through the framework accordingly.**

##### *Option 1 - Define Your Own Specifications*

The Notebook Framework covers the supply of any specification of Notebook from the 6 qualified Vendors' commercial ranges - excluding pcs, servers, workstations, thin-clients or any product that is not a Notebook. Each Vendor has an agreed range of products that are aimed at satisfying any Notebook requirement, from low-end machines to high-end developer.

We have defined standard specifications for two Notebook categories (Standard Notebook & Light-weight Notebook) with the aim of making it easier to buy those types of products. If Customers consider the standard categories are insufficient to meet their demands, then Customers are free to define their own specifications.

##### *Option 2 - Use the Standard Category Products*

- i. Standard Notebook
- ii. Lightweight Notebook

##### **Standard Notebook**

This is a product which has been defined by the Contract Manager in consultation with the ICT Frameworks Steering Group which should meet the requirements of most customers who are looking for a Notebook which will be suitable for most tasks. The technical specification of this product is updated on a frequent basis to reflect changes in the software and hardware environments. Information regarding the latest standard Notebook proposed by the vendors is available in the most current Price List PDF doc.

##### **Lightweight Notebook**

This is a product which has been defined by the Contract Manager in consultation with the ICT Frameworks Steering Group which should meet the requirements of most customers who are looking for a Notebook which is designed for ease of movement, coupled with a good spec that is more than adequate for the majority of tasks. The technical specification of this category product is updated on a frequent basis to reflect changes in the software and hardware environments. Information regarding the latest

standard lightweight notebooks proposed by the vendors is available in the most current Price List PDF doc.

### ***Option 3 - Use a Variant of the Standard Category Products***

If customer requirements are close to the standard category products, but not an exact match (e.g. may require more RAM), they are free to modify the standard specifications and request a quote through the framework accordingly.

## **3.2 Prices**

Please see the latest “Price List” which available from the Contract Manager as a separate PDF document. (Pack 2).

## **3.3 Notebook Issues**

### **3.3.1 BAPCo Benchmarking**

*Public procurement Directives require that in the award of public contracts, contracting authorities must avoid the use of restrictive technical specifications.*

*The use of specs which include brand names like "Pentium 4 or equivalent" or "Intel or equivalent" or specifying processors with a clock rate above a certain speed is not permitted. Consequently, specifications should indicate that each Notebook must meet or exceed an overall performance rating using the BAPCo benchmark.*

#### **What is BAPCo?**

BAPCo benchmarks are used to establish the relative performance of PCs and Notebooks. BAPCo is a not-for-profit organisation with membership consisting of virtually all of the major industry manufacturers (see [www.BAPCo.com](http://www.BAPCo.com) for details). The benchmarks use a suite of common applications (such as Microsoft Word, Adobe Photoshop, etc.) doing a number of common tasks so the PCs and Notebooks are evaluated under “real world” conditions.

#### **Why do we use BAPCo?**

Over time it had become common practice for anyone buying PCs or Notebooks to specify their requirements in terms of the processor manufacturer and architecture (e.g. 1.5GHz, 1MB level 2 cache, etc). While there was no suggestion of ill intent and the “or equivalent” phrase was often used and genuinely meant, specifying PCs and Notebooks in this way did put some manufacturers at a disadvantage as their architectures achieved similar performances using lower clock speeds. That meant they were unnecessarily disqualified from a lot of competitions and in those they were not disqualified from they had to overcome a perception of lower performance because of lower clock speeds. Their argument for a means of measuring a computer’s performance that did not rely solely on the processor architecture was upheld by the EU Commission and consequently Contracting Authorities within the EU were advised to find an alternative and more equitable way of specifying their requirements.

The [recommended](#) product for doing this was BAPCo, which determines a product's overall performance by taking account of the multitude of factors that contribute to it, such as the processor, RAM, hard disk, graphics and sound sub-systems, etc. That makes it a far easier way to compare two machines, whether they are of apparently similar construction or radically different.

### **How do we use it?**

We use two of the BAPCo benchmarks for the frameworks: SysMark 2004 (or 2004SE) for PCs and MobileMark 2005 for Notebooks. Each of these gives a performance score that can be used in the first instance to compare the performance of a number of PCs and Notebooks (though they can't be used to compare the relative performance of a Notebook against a PC) and secondly to determine the cost/performance value a particular PC or Notebook offers. This is done by dividing the cost by the BAPCo score, effectively giving a price per BAPCo point, and the lower this value is the better.

The MobileMark benchmark also gives a battery life value, so customers can see how long a particular notebook's battery will last under normal working conditions.

### **Benchmark Scores for Standard Category Notebooks**

The Notebook Framework includes a number of Standard Category Notebooks (e.g. Standard Notebook, Light-weight Notebook, etc.). The Performance Benchmark for a Standard Category Notebook has to be met or exceeded before a Notebook can be approved by the Framework Contract Management and offered to customers of the Frameworks as a Standard Category Product.

Vendors must benchmark each of their Standard Category Notebooks using BAPCo, and declare the BAPCO rating they have achieved. The Contract Manager will periodically select a Vendor's Standard Category Notebook on a random basis, and will conduct its own BAPCO benchmarking on that Notebook. Where discrepancies are found between the BAPCo rating declaration made by a Vendor for a particular Standard Category Notebook and the BAPCo rating results achieved by the Contract Manager for the same Standard Category Notebook, the Vendor may face sanction. Please see Section 11.2 (d) of the VPA for details of the specific sanction that may be applied.

In order to ensure integrity of results, each standard category product must be benchmarked according to a standard procedure drawn-up by the Contract Manager.

### **Benchmark Scores for Non-standard Notebooks**

For non-standard products, customers are encouraged to request a BAPCo rating for the *exact configuration* of Notebook that each vendor is proposing because variations in RAM and other items can have a significant impact on the benchmark score.

As a part of its license agreement, BAPCo requires that all licensees submit a Full Disclosure Report (FDR) to BAPCo any time such licensees publish any performance results related to BAPCo. BAPCo further requires that all systems for which a



performance result is published must be available for purchase by the public immediately or at most 60 days after publication of such results. All results published may be derived only from a complete and correct execution of all SYSmark benchmarks under the control of the Workload Manager. All tests must be performed without modification to any part of the SYSmark software. SYSmark software includes BAPCo benchmark files, application files, and data files that reside in the BAPCo directory structure or are associated with the benchmark. The reason for these requirements is clear: all performance claims regarding BAPCo benchmarks must be repeatable and comparable when using the configurations listed in the FDR.

Further details are available on the [BAPCo](#) website.

### 3.3.2 Green Rating

<b>ECO Label</b>		
Eco-label is a European certification scheme aimed to help consumers distinguish environmentally friendly products and services. Eco-label aims at stimulating both supply and demand of products with reduced environmental impact and give the consumer the means to make informed environmental choices when purchasing. Eco-label applies to the 3 stages of a product’s lifecycle:		
<b>Life Cycle</b>	<b>Criteria</b>	<b>Performance Categories</b>
Manufacturing	Limitation of Harmful Substances	Dangerous Substances Directive (67/58/EEC) PBB PBDE Mercury Cadmium Lead
Use	Energy Saving	Energy Star ACPI S3 sleep state
	User Instructions for Environmental Use	Power management, Spare parts Security Risks
	Reduction of Noise	≤ 40 dB(A) Idle ≤ 45 dB(A) Accessing HDD
	Reduction of Electromagnetic Emissions	Compliance with EN50279 Category A
End of Life	Limitation of Waste	Easy Dismantling Recycling
	Durability	Replaceable parts
Further details on Eco-label are available from the following URLs:		
· Desktop NOTEBOOKS:	<a href="http://ec.europa.eu/environment/ecolabel/product/pg_personalcomputers_en.htm">http://ec.europa.eu/environment/ecolabel/product/pg_personalcomputers_en.htm</a>	
· Notebooks:	<a href="http://ec.europa.eu/environment/ecolabel/product/pg_portablecomputers_en.htm">http://ec.europa.eu/environment/ecolabel/product/pg_portablecomputers_en.htm</a>	

<b><u>EPEAT</u></b>		
<p>EPEAT is a system to help purchasers evaluate, compare and select desktop computers, notebooks and monitors based on their environmental attributes. Compliance with the IEEE1680 Standard is integrated into the EPEAT system. Manufacturers declare their products’ conformance to a set of environmental criteria in 8 environmental performance categories:</p>		
<b>Criteria</b>	<b>Performance Categories</b>	
Reduction/Elimination of Environmentally Sensitive Materials	Compliance with the European RoHS Directive	
Material Selection	Declaration of recycled and renewable materials	
Product Longevity/Life Cycle Reduction	Availability of additional 3 year warranty Upgradeability	
Energy Conservation	Energy Star	
End of Life Management	Replaceable parts	
Corporate Performance	Corporate environmental policy consistent with ISO14001	
Packaging	Declaration of recycled content Reduction/Elimination of added toxics Separable materials	
<p>EPEAT evaluates electronic products according to three tiers of environmental performance – Bronze, Silver and Gold. There are 51 total environmental criteria in IEEE 1680: 23 required and 28 optional ones.</p>		
Meets all 23 required criteria	Meets all 23 required criteria plus at least 50% of the optional criteria	Meets all 23 required criteria plus at least 75% of the optional criteria
<p>Further details on EPEAT are available from: <a href="http://www.epeat.net/">http://www.epeat.net/</a></p>		

<b><u>Energy Star</u></b>
<p>In 1992 the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) introduced ENERGY STAR as a voluntary labelling program designed to identify and promote energy-efficient products to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Further details on Energy Star are available from : <a href="http://www.energystar.gov/">http://www.energystar.gov/</a></p>

### 3.3.3 Operating System Options

#### Microsoft 7

The current Standard Operating System for PCs and Notebook computers is Microsoft Windows 7 Professional which means that unless you specify otherwise in your Request for Quote the Vendors will supply your PCs or Notebooks with that operating system and the appropriate hardware drivers.

#### Alternative OS/No OS Installed

If you wish to buy products with an alternative operating system (Linux, Unix etc) or indeed without an operating system installed you can do so by running a mini-competition for a variant of the standard products (i.e. the specification is the same as a standard product, such as the Standard Office PC, for all other items except the operating system) or for a non-standard product, where your requirements are substantially different from the specifications offered by the standard ones. If you wish to do this there are a couple of important points to note:

Not all of the Vendors can supply products with an alternative operating system to Microsoft Windows installed. However, enough of them can do it to satisfy the frameworks' requirements for competition.

If you buy a PC or Notebook without an operating system or with an alternative operating system to Microsoft Windows and subsequently decide that you want to install a version of Windows (either instead of the alternative or alongside it) the only legal means of acquiring a licence is through the retail channel: the licences available through the various Volume Licence Agreements (e.g. Select, Campus, etc.) are upgrade licences only and require a version of Windows to exist on the machine already.

## 4. ASSOCIATED PRODUCTS

In addition to the Notebooks, the Framework also covers products associated with them, such as monitors, RAM, keyboards and mice, etc. You can buy these associated products with a Notebook or separately. Where you are buying Products that are associated with just one Vendor's Notebook you can buy them directly from that Vendor, otherwise the same rules apply as though you were buying Notebooks through the Framework.

An up-to-date price list for associated products is available on request from the Contract Manager.

## 5. ASSOCIATED SERVICES

### 5.1. Associated Services

In addition to the Notebooks, the Framework provides associated services related to them, and some specific examples of these are given below. The costs of these services will vary depending on the number of Notebooks involved, and some of the vendors require a minimum number of purchases for some of them (such as image deployment). If you wish to avail of one or more of these services then all you have to do is specify your requirement in your Request for Quote.

#### **Unpack & Remove**

Unpacking & Packaging Removal Service whereby equipment bought through the Framework is delivered to the installation point in the Customer's premises, unpacked by the Vendor's agent and all packaging relating to the delivered item(s) is taken from the Customer's premises for disposal by the Vendor's agent.

#### **Repair**

Notebook Repair Services whereby faulty Notebooks and associated products, whether purchased through the Framework or not, are removed from the Customer's premises by the Vendor's agent and repaired.

#### **Disposal**

Notebook Disposal Services whereby obsolete Notebooks and associated products, whether purchased through the Framework or not, are removed from the Customer's premises by the Vendor's agent and disposed of in a secure manner and in accordance with all relevant legislation.

#### **Installation**

Installation whereby equipment bought through the Framework is delivered to the installation point in the Customer's premises, unpacked by the Vendor's agent, installed for the Customer's use by the Vendor's qualified agent and all packaging relating to the delivered and installed item(s) is taken from the Customer's premises for disposal by the Vendor's agent.

#### **Configuration**

Device Configuration whereby the Vendor or Vendor's agent will deliver a device bought through the framework with an agreed configuration pre-installed.

## 6.VENDORS

### 6.1. Qualified Vendors

There are six qualified vendors participating in the Notebook Framework.




### 6.2.Toshiba

	
<b>Company</b>	Toshiba
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.toshiba.ie">http://www.toshiba.ie</a>
<b>Postal Address</b>	Toshiba, Toshiba Court, Weybridge Business Park Addlestone Road, Weybridge KT15 2UL, Surrey, England, UK

<b>Government Account Manager</b>	Janice Robertson
<b>Telephone</b>	(087) 2640204
<b>Email Address</b>	<a href="mailto:Janice.Robertson@toshiba.ie">Janice.Robertson@toshiba.ie</a>
<b>Email for Mini-competitions</b>	<a href="mailto:notebookframework@gov.ie">notebookframework@gov.ie</a>


### 6.3.Lenovo

	
<b>Company</b>	Lenovo
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.lenovo.com/ie">http://www.lenovo.com/ie</a>
<b>Postal Address</b>	Lenovo Barclay House 6 Pembroke Place Dublin 2 Ireland
<b>Government Account Manager</b>	Niamh Minnock
<b>Telephone</b>	(087) 624 6280
<b>Email Address</b>	<a href="mailto:lenfr@ie.lenovo.com">lenfr@ie.lenovo.com</a>
<b>Email for Mini-competitions</b>	<a href="mailto:notebookframework@gov.ie">notebookframework@gov.ie</a>

## 6.4.HP

	
<b>Company</b>	HP
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.hp.com/ie">http://www.hp.com/ie</a>
<b>Postal Address</b>	HP Liffey Park Technology Campus Barnhall Road Leixlip Co Kildare Ireland
<b>Government Account Manager</b>	Ann Marie O'Connell
<b>Telephone</b>	(01) 615 8419 (01) 615 8296
<b>Email Address</b>	<a href="mailto:irlpublicsector@hp.com">irlpublicsector@hp.com</a>
<b>Email for Mini-competitions</b>	<a href="mailto:notebookframework@gov.ie">notebookframework@gov.ie</a>

## 6.5.PC Peripherals

	
<b>Company</b>	PC Peripherals
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.pcp.ie/">http://www.pcp.ie/</a>
<b>Postal Address</b>	PC Peripherals,

	67A Heather Road, Sandyford Industrial Estate, Dublin 18.
<b>Government Account Manager</b>	Martin Byrne
<b>Telephone</b>	01 2917900
<b>Email Address</b>	Martin.byrne@pcp.ie
<b>Email for Mini-competitions</b>	<a href="mailto:notebookframework@gov.ie">notebookframework@gov.ie</a>

### 6.6.Dell

	
<b>Company</b>	Dell
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.dell.ie">http://www.dell.ie</a>
<b>Postal Address</b>	Dell Cherrywood Science & Technology Park Dublin 18 Ireland
<b>Government Account Manager</b>	Public Sector Team
<b>Telephone</b>	1850 403 103
<b>Email Address</b>	<a href="mailto:iedub_public_contracts@dell.com">iedub_public_contracts@dell.com</a>
<b>Email for Mini-competitions</b>	<a href="mailto:notebookframework@gov.ie">notebookframework@gov.ie</a>





## 7. CONTRACT MANAGER

### 7.1. Contract Manager

A Contract Manager has been appointed by the Department of Public Expenditure & Reform, under the direction of the ICT Frameworks Steering Group.

The Contract Manager ensures the needs of the vendors and the relevant purchasers are met, e.g. in regard to customer complaints, supplier complaints, monitoring of the framework so that it is operated in accordance with the terms set down and is delivering required outcomes.

If you want to use any of the services offered by the Contract Manager or have any questions on how to use the framework, contact the Contract Manager:

ICT Frameworks Team  
CMOD  
Department of Public Expenditure & Reform  
7<sup>th</sup> Floor Lansdowne House  
Lansdowne Road  
Dublin 4  
(01) 604 5106  
ictframeworks@gov.ie

### 7.2. Contract Management Service

The contract management service involves developing and co-ordinating purchasing mechanisms, meeting lowest price and best value targets and upholding high technical standards.

Information and advice is provided to the customers and vendors on the operation of the framework through this service, as well as mechanisms for the resolution, and where necessary the escalation of disputes.

Some of the services that you can avail of are:

- Advice and assistance in choosing the best approach (spot-buying or a drawdown)
- Advice and assistance in choosing and phrasing award criteria
- On-site assistance for large-scale procurements
- Assistance in dealing with any service, product or quality issues you may have with a vendor

### 7.3. Payment

Payment and Invoicing arrangements will be agreed by the relevant Customer and the selected Vendor in each case.

### 7.4. Warranty

A range of warranty options are available, with the standard option being for **3-years, Countrywide, Next Business Day on-site Service** and covering all parts and labour costs. The cover period must not be less than 9 am to 5.30 pm, Monday through Friday.

Telephone support in resolving routine difficulties is also provided during the said business hours (Monday-Friday).

Customers can extend/reduce the standard warranty by stating so in the RFQ.

Qualified Suppliers warrant that all goods furnished under a Customer Contract are of a high quality. Please see Section S1-2.8 of the Vendor Participation Agreement.doc for further details.

### 7.5. Dispute Resolution

If you are dissatisfied with the goods and/or service provided by a Vendor or have any specific concerns, these should be discussed in the first instance directly with the Vendor.

If the problem or issue is not resolved to your satisfaction the Contract Manager should then be contacted.

### 7.6. Framework Review

A review process is in place to ensure that the products and services supplied by the Vendors are continuously improved.

Contract reviews, coordinated by the ICT Frameworks Steering Group, aim to:

- ensure prices charged to agencies reflect the lowest price guarantee price
- ensure services and products sold under this Framework reflect the range of services products agreed for supply
- examine Vendor performance
- assess Customer satisfaction
- monitor compliance with Government policies, EU and National procurement laws.

The Contract Manager may impose sanctions, including suspension of selling rights, on the Vendors where they are in breach of the VPA terms and conditions or have repeatedly failed to meet contract requirements.

Annual Review

The Department of Public Expenditure & Reform will conduct a formal review of each agreement after its initial year of operation.

Where this review concludes that the service is operating satisfactorily, the agreement will be rolled over for twelve months.

This review process will be carried out annually; and after 3 years of operation in total, the Department of Public Expenditure & Reform may, at its discretion, roll the agreement over for a further maximum period of one year, subject to similar review procedures.

---End of Document---