



TENDER FILE / TERMS OF REFERENCE (Competitive bidding procedure / Framework Contract)

Purchase of Consultancy services for the creation of a European Space for Citizenship Education

The Council of Europe is currently (and until 31 December 2026) developing the key areas that will constitute the European Space for Citizenship Education. The aim of the European Space for Citizenship Education is to ensure the sustainability of democracy through quality citizenship education. In that context, it is looking for Provider(s) for the provision of consultancy services to be requested by the Council on an as needed basis.

A. TENDER RULES

This tender procedure is a competitive bidding procedure. **In accordance with Rule 1395 of the Secretary General of the Council of Europe on the procurement procedures of the Council of Europe¹, the Organisation shall invite to tender at least three potential providers for any purchase between €2,000 (or €6,000 for intellectual services) and €171.000 tax exclusive.**

This specific tender procedure aims at concluding a **framework contract** for the provision of deliverables described in the Act of Engagement (See attached). A tender is considered valid for 180 calendar days as from the closing date for submission. The selection of tenderers will be made in the light of the criteria indicated below. All tenderers will be informed in writing of the outcome of the procedure.

The tenderer must be either a natural person, a legal person or consortia of legal and/or natural persons.

Tenders shall be submitted **by email only** (with attachments) **to the email address indicated in the table below, with the following reference in subject: Tender – European Space for Citizenship Education.** Tenders addressed to another email address **will be rejected.**

The general information and contact details for this procedure are indicated on this page. You are invited to use the CoE Contact details indicated below for any question you may have. **All questions shall be submitted at least 3 (three) working days before the deadline for submission of the tenders and shall be exclusively addressed to the email address indicated below with the following reference in subject: Questions - European Space for Citizenship Education**

Type of contract ▶	Framework contract
Duration ▶	Until 31 December 2026
Deadline for submission of tenders/offers ▶	02 September 2024 23h59 CET
Email for submission of tenders/offers ▶	dgii.edu.dept@coe.int
Email for questions ▶	dgii.edu.dept@coe.int
Expected starting date of execution ▶	16 September 2024

¹ The activities of the Council of Europe are governed by its [Statute](#) and its internal Regulations. Procurement is governed by the Financial Regulations of the Organisation and by [Rule 1395 of 20 June 2019 on the procurement procedures of the Council of Europe](#).

B. EXPECTED DELIVERABLES

Background of the Project

The Education Department of the Council of Europe, as part of the action planned within Pilar 1 of its Education Strategy 2024-2030, "Renewing the democratic and civic mission of education", is proposing the creation of a European Space for Citizenship Education, which aims to ensure the sustainability of democracy through quality citizenship education. Europe is experiencing democratic backsliding. It faces threats that undermine the culture of democracy and its values and principles, such as the return of war, radicalisation, a weakening commitment to freedom of expression, increasing discrimination, online hate speech and discontentment with governmental efforts to tackle climate change.

The crises of democracy have exacerbated some of the existing shortcomings of education systems. Learners do not have sufficient opportunities to benefit from an education that prepares them to become active and informed citizens in democratic societies. In this context, the democratic values of respect for human dignity and human rights, cultural diversity and democracy, justice, equity, equality and the rule of law remain essential. Furthermore, citizenship education is not playing its full role to strengthen the digital skills of citizens, thereby protecting European democracy against interference and manipulation online. To tackle these challenges, this project will engage the state parties to the European Cultural Convention in a collaborative process to define and establish the essential elements that will underpin a standard for European quality citizenship education and shape the European Space itself.

The European Space for Citizenship Education will consist in three key areas: codification of values and principles of citizenship education, accountability and quality assurance, and cooperation. The specific goals of this collaborative initiative include:

- Analysing and defining the fundamental principles and values that form the backbone of quality citizenship education, addressing both current and future challenges.
- Developing a framework of accountability that tracks the progresses of the member states in developing quality citizenship education and foster a democratic culture.
- Establishing targets for advancing quality citizenship education in member states.
- Exploring new ways of cooperation among member states committed to upholding democratic values and principles.

The Council of Europe is looking for a maximum of 15 Provider(s) (provided enough tenders meet the criteria indicated below) in order to support the implementation of the project with a particular expertise on citizenship education.

This Contract is currently estimated to cover up to 20 activities, to be held by 31 December 2026. This estimate is for information only and shall not constitute any sort of contractual commitment on the part of the Council of Europe. The Contract may potentially represent a higher or lower number of activities, depending on the evolving needs of the Organisation.

For information purposes only, the total budget of the project amounts to 700.000 Euros and the total amount of the object of present tender **shall not exceed 171,000 Euros tax exclusive** for the whole duration of the Framework Contract. This information does not constitute any sort of contractual commitment or obligation on the part of the Council of Europe.

Scope of the Framework Contract

Throughout the duration of the Framework Contract, pre-selected Providers may be asked to:

- Analyse in-depth instruments, recommendations, and relevant materials produced by the Council of Europe in the field of citizenship education, education for democratic citizenship and human rights education, and codify the values and principles of quality citizenship education from these texts;
- Compare existing models of accountability in citizenship education in Europe and propose a new framework of accountability and quality assurance for the European Space for Citizenship Education;
- Suggest new forms of cooperation among member states in the field of citizenship education.

The above list is not considered exhaustive. The Council reserves the right to request deliverables not explicitly mentioned in the above list of expected services, but related to the field of expertise object of the present Framework Contract.

In terms of **quality requirements**, the pre-selected Service Providers must ensure, *inter alia*, that:

- The services are provided to the highest professional/academic standard;
- Any specific instructions given by the Council – whenever this is the case – are followed.

In addition to the orders requested on an as needed basis, the Provider shall keep regular communication with the Council to ensure continuing exchange of information relevant to the project implementation. This involves, among others, to inform the Council as soon as it becomes aware, during the execution of the Contract, of any initiatives and/or adopted laws and regulations, policies, strategies or action plans or any other development related to the object of the Contract (see more on general obligations of the Provider in Article 3.1.2 of the Legal Conditions in the Act of Engagement).

Unless otherwise agreed with the Council, written documents produced by the Provider shall be in English (see more on requirements for written documents in Articles 3.2.2 and 3.2.3 of the Legal Conditions in the Act of Engagement).

C. FEES

Tenderers are invited to indicate their fees, by completing and sending the table of fees, as attached in Section A to the Act of Engagement. These fees are final and not subject to review.

The Council will indicate on each Order Form (see Section D below) the global fee corresponding to each deliverable, calculated on the basis of the unit fees, as agreed by this Contract.

D. HOW WILL THIS FRAMEWORK CONTRACT WORK? (ORDERING PROCEDURE)

Once the selection procedure is completed, you will be informed accordingly. Deliverables will then be delivered on the basis of Order Forms submitted by the Council to the selected Provider (s), by post or electronically, on **an as needed basis** (there is therefore no obligation to order on the part of the Council).

Pooling

For each Order, the Council will choose from the pool of pre-selected tenderers the Provider who demonstrably offers best value for money for its requirement when assessed – for the Order concerned – against the criteria of:

- quality (including as appropriate: capability, expertise, past performance, availability of resources and proposed methods of undertaking the work);
- availability (including, without limitation, capacity to meet required deadlines and, where relevant, geographical location); and
- price.

Only those Providers whose score, following the assessment of the Award Criteria (see Section E below), is equivalent to or higher than 50 out of 100 will be selected.

Each time an Order Form is sent, the selected Provider undertakes to take all the necessary measures to send it **signed** to the Council within 2 (two) working days after its reception. If a Provider is unable to take an Order or if no reply is given on his behalf within that deadline, the Council may call on another Provider using the same criteria, and so on until a suitable Provider is contracted.

Providers subject to VAT

The Provider, **if subject to VAT**, shall also send, together with each signed Form, a quote² (Pro Forma invoice) in line with the indications specified on each Order Form, and including:

- the Service Provider's name and address;
- its VAT number;
- the full list of services;
- the fee per type of deliverables (in the currency indicated on the Act of Engagement, tax exclusive);
- the total amount per type of deliverables (in the currency indicated on the Act of Engagement, tax exclusive);

² It must strictly respect the fees indicated in the Act of Engagement. In case of non-compliance with these fees, the Council of Europe reserves the right to terminate the Contract with the Provider, in all or in part.

- the total amount (in the currency indicated on the Act of Engagement), tax exclusive, the applicable VAT rate, the amount of VAT and the amount VAT inclusive .

Signature of orders

An Order Form is considered to be legally binding when the Order, signed by the Provider, is approved by the Council, by displaying a Council's Purchase Order number on the Order, as well as by signing and stamping the Order concerned. Copy of each approved Order Form shall be sent to the Provider, to the extent possible on the day of its signature.

E. ASSESSMENT

Exclusion criteria and absence of conflict of interests

(by signing the Act of Engagement, you declare on your honour not being in any of the below situations)³

Tenderers shall be excluded from participating in the tender procedure if they:

- have been sentenced by final judgment on one or more of the following charges: participation in a criminal organisation, corruption, fraud, money laundering, terrorist financing, terrorist offences or offences linked to terrorist activities, child labour or trafficking in human beings;
- are in a situation of bankruptcy, liquidation, termination of activity, insolvency or arrangement with creditors or any like situation arising from a procedure of the same kind, or are subject to a procedure of the same kind;
- have received a judgment with res judicata force, finding an offence that affects their professional integrity or serious professional misconduct;
- do not comply with their obligations as regards payment of social security contributions, taxes and dues, according to the statutory provisions of their country of incorporation, establishment or residence;
- are an entity created to circumvent tax, social or other legal obligations (empty shell company), have ever created or are in the process of creation of such an entity;
- have been involved in mismanagement of the Council of Europe funds or public funds;
- are or appear to be in a situation of conflict of interest;
- are retired Council of Europe staff members or are staff members having benefitted from an early departure scheme;
- are currently employed by the Council of Europe or were employed by the Council of Europe on the date of the launch of the procurement procedure;
- have not fulfilled, in the previous three years, their contractual obligations in the performance of a contract concluded with the Council of Europe leading to a total or partial refusal of payment and/or termination of the contract by the Council of Europe.

Eligibility criteria

Tenderers shall demonstrate that they fulfil the following criteria:

- Advanced university degree in education, pedagogy, social sciences, political sciences, or any related field;
- At least 8 years of relevant professional experience at international level in the areas related to citizenship education, education for democratic citizenship, education for democracy, human rights education;
- Excellent oral and written knowledge of English, at least level C1 of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR).

Award criteria

- Quality of the offer (90%), including:
 - Prior experience in developing intellectual work on citizenship education such as policy documents, research, and analytical reports (25%);
 - Prior experience in programme evaluation, national and/or international examinations or assessment in education, preferably on citizenship education (25%);

³ The Council of Europe reserves the right to ask tenderers, at a later stage, to supply the following supporting documents:

- An extract from the record of convictions or failing that an equivalent document issued by the competent judicial or administrative authority of the country of incorporation, indicating that the first three and sixth above listed exclusion criteria are met;
- A certificate issued by the competent authority of the country of incorporation indicating that the fourth criterion is met.

- Prior experience in policy development and legislation on citizenship education (25%);
- Prior experience in comparative education and/or cooperation projects on citizenship education (15%);

- Financial offer (10%).

For Consultancy ONLY: The Council reserves the right to hold interviews with tenderers.

Multiple tendering is not authorised.

F. NEGOTIATIONS

The Council reserves the right to hold negotiations with the bidders in accordance with Article 20 of Rule 1395.

G. DOCUMENTS TO BE PROVIDED

- **A completed and signed copy of the Act of Engagement⁴** (See attached);
- A detailed CV, preferably in Europass Format, demonstrating clearly that the tenderer fulfils the eligibility criteria;
- Registration documents, for legal persons only;

All documents shall be submitted in English, failure to do so will result in the exclusion of the tender.

If any of the documents listed above are missing, the Council of Europe reserves the right to reject the tender.

The Council reserves the right to reject a tender if the scanned documents are of such a quality that the documents cannot be read once printed.

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⁴ The Act of Engagement must be completed, signed and scanned in its entirety (i.e. including all the pages). The scanned Act of Engagement may be sent page by page (attached to a single email) or as a compiled document, although a compiled document would be preferred. For all scanned documents, .pdf files are preferred.