
General Rules Governing Tenders *v2.4*

*Department of
Contracts*

July 2018

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1. **Law**

- 1.1 By submitting their tenders, tenderers are accepting that this procedure is regulated by Maltese Law, and are deemed to know all relevant laws, acts and regulations of Malta that may in any way affect or govern the operations and activities covered by the tender and the resulting contract.
- 1.2 Particular attention is drawn to the conditions concerning the employment of labour in Malta and the obligation to comply with all regulations, rules or instructions concerning the conditions of employment of any class of employee.

2. **Participation**

- 2.1 Participation in tendering is open on equal terms to all natural and legal persons of the Member States of the European Union, the beneficiary country and any other country.

In case of a negotiated or restricted procedure, participation in tendering may be open only to the firms who have been invited by the Contracting Authority. Tenders should be submitted by the same tenderer who has been invited in this procedure. No change whatsoever in the identity or composition of the tenderer is permitted.

- 2.2 Natural persons, companies or undertakings who fall under any of the conditions set out in Part VI of the Public Procurement Regulations, 2016 shall be excluded from participation in and the award of contracts. Tenderers or candidates who have been guilty of making false declarations will incur financial penalties representing 10% of the total value of the contract that is subsequently awarded.

Provided that the economic operator does not prove in his offer that he should not be excluded as established under PART VI of the Public Procurement Regulations.

- 2.3 Tenders submitted by companies forming a joint venture/consortium/group of Economic Operators must also fulfil the following requirements:
 - One partner must be appointed lead partner and that appointment confirmed by submission of powers of attorney signed by legally empowered signatories representing all the individual partners. The tender must include a preliminary agreement or letter of intent stating that all partners assume joint and several liability for the execution of the contract, that the lead partner is authorised to bind, and receive instructions for and on behalf of, all partners, individually and collectively.

- All partners in the joint venture/consortium/group of Economic Operators are bound to remain in the joint venture/consortium/group of Economic Operators until the conclusion of the contracting procedure. The consortium/joint venture/group of Economic Operators winning this contract must include the same partners for the whole performance period of the contract other than as may be permitted or required by law.

2.4 In the case of a joint venture/consortium/group of Economic Operators, the joint venture/consortium/group of Economic Operators as a whole must satisfy the criteria established in the Instructions to Tenderers.

2.5 An economic operator may, where appropriate and for a particular contract, rely on the capacities of other entities, regardless of the legal nature of the links which it has with them. It must in that case prove to the contracting authority that it will have at its disposal the resources necessary, for example, by producing an undertaking by those entities to that effect.

3. Multiple Tenders

3.1 An Economic Operator may submit multiple tender offers.

3.2 An Economic Operator may not, however, tender for a given contract both individually and as a partner in a joint venture/consortium.

3.3 An Economic Operator may not tender for a given contract both individually/partner in a joint venture/consortium, and at the same time be nominated as a subcontractor by any another tenderer, or joint venture/consortium.

3.4 An Economic Operator may act as a subcontractor for any number of tenderers, and joint ventures/consortia, provided that it does not participate individually or as part of a joint venture/consortium, and that the nominations do not lead to a conflict of interest, collusion, or improper practice.

3.5 The Central Government Authority and or the Contracting Authority is to ask an economic operator to replace the sub-contractor within 5 working days, if during the evaluation process it transpires that a sub-contractor is either black-listed or does not satisfy the exclusion-criteria listed under PART VI of the Public Procurement Regulations.

3.6 If the Economic operator does not comply with the request made by the Central Government Authority and or the Contracting Authority under clause 3.5 his offer shall be rejected unless he proves that the sub-contractor should not be excluded under PART VI of the Public Procurement Regulations.

4. *Tender Expenses*

- 4.1 The Economic Operator will bear all costs associated with the preparation and submission of the tender. The Central Government Authority/Contracting Authority (CGA/CA) will neither be responsible for, nor cover, any expenses or losses incurred by the tenderer through site visits and inspections or any other aspect of his tender.

5. *Content of Tender Document*

- 5.1 This tender document should be read in conjunction with any clarification notes issued in accordance with Clause 6.
- 5.2 Tenderers bear sole liability for examining with appropriate care the procurement documents, including those design documents available for inspection, and any clarification notes to the procurement documents issued during the tendering period, and for obtaining reliable information with respect to conditions and obligations that may in any way affect the amount or nature of the tender or the execution of the works. In the event that the tenderer is successful, no claim for alteration of the contract value will be entertained on the grounds of errors or omissions in the obligations of the tenderer described above.
- 5.3 The Economic Operator must provide all information and documents required by the provisions of the procurement document. All such documents, without exception, must comply strictly with these conditions and provisions and contain no alterations made by the tenderer.

6. *Explanations/Clarification Notes Concerning Procurement Documents*

- 6.1 Economic Operators may submit questions in writing to the Central Government Authority/Contracting Authority through the contact details and within the timeframes as detailed in Clause 2 of the Instructions to Tenderers. The Central Government Authority/Contracting Authority must reply to all Economic Operators' questions, and apply any necessary corrections to the procurement documents by publishing clarification notes, as well as issue corrigenda to the procurement document, up to at least 6 calendar days for tenders above the departmental threshold and up to at least 4 days for departmental tenders, before the deadline for submission of tenders. Clarifications received by other means will not be taken into consideration.

- 6.2 Questions and answers, minor alterations and corrigenda to the procurement document will be published as a clarification note on the Government's e-Procurement Platform www.etenders.gov.mt within the respective tender's workspace. Clarification notes will constitute an integral part of the procurement documentation, and it is the responsibility of Economic Operators to visit this website and be aware of the latest information published online prior to submitting their offer.
- 6.3 All correspondence and documents related to the procurement document exchanged by the Economic Operator and the Central Government Authority/Contracting Authority must be written in English. Supporting documents and printed literature furnished by the Economic Operator may be in another language, provided they are accompanied by an accurate translation into English. For the purposes of interpretation of the procurement document, the English language will prevail.

7. Tender Prices and Currencies

- 7.1 Before submitting their offer, Economic Operators are to ensure its correctness and completeness and to have taken account of all that is required for the full and proper performance of the contract, and to have included all costs in their rates and prices.
- 7.2 Economic Operators must quote all components of the price **inclusive** of taxes, customs and import duties and any discounts **BUT** excluding VAT. VAT shall be paid in accordance with the applicable VAT Regulations.
- 7.3 For EU-funded contracts over €250,000, where VAT is not an eligible cost, and whose output VAT is liable to be paid in Malta, such VAT will be paid directly to the VAT Department in Malta by the Final Beneficiary.
- 7.4 The price offered must include all of the works/services/supplies to be provided. Unless otherwise provided in the procurement documents, the prices quoted by the tenderer are fixed and not subject to revision or escalation in costs.
- 7.5 The currency of the tender is the Euro (€). **Offers are to be submitted up to two decimal points.**
- 7.6 All instances where reference is made to the financial offer must be expressed in Euro (€), with the exception of bank and financial statements, where applicable.

- 7.7 Where Economic Operators submit bank and financial statements which are not denominated in Euro (€), the conversion rate used shall be the same conversion rate applicable on the date of the closing date for submission.

8. *Period of Validity of Tenders*

- 8.1 Tenders must remain valid for a period of 90 days after the deadline for submission of tenders indicated in the contract notice, the procurement document or as modified in accordance with Clause 10.1. Any tenderer who quotes a shorter validity period will be rejected.
- 8.2 The Director General Contracts/Head of Contracting Authority may consider cancelling the tender in line with what is established in Regulation 15 of the Public Procurement Regulations (2016).
- 8.3 In exceptional circumstances the Central Government Authority/Contracting Authority may request that tenderers extend the validity of tenders, without the need to extend the validity of the Tender Guarantee (Bid Bond), for two further periods of four (4) weeks each. Such requests and the responses to them must be made in writing. A tenderer may refuse to comply with such a request without forfeiting his tender guarantee (Bid Bond). However, his tender will no longer be considered for award. If the tenderer decides to accede to the extension, he may not modify his tender.
- 8.4 Following the further extension by eight (8) weeks, the non conclusion of the evaluation process may lead to the cancellation of the tender.
- 8.5 The recommended bidder must maintain his tender for a further 60 days from the date of notification of award.
- 8.6 Once the recommendation has become definitive the recommended bidder is obliged to accept the offer through Government's e-procurement platform.

9. *Submitting a Tender*

Tenders must be compiled, packed and uploaded on www.etenders.gov.mt **before** the deadline specified in Clause 2 of the Instructions to Tenderers, or as otherwise modified in accordance with Clause 10 of this document. An email receipt will acknowledge the submission of the tender. Tenders submitted by any other means will not be considered.

10. Extension of Deadline for Submission of Tenders

The Central Government Authority/Contracting Authority may, at its own discretion, extend the deadline for submission of tenders to give Economic Operators sufficient time to take clarification notes into account when preparing their tenders. Economic Operators will be notified with any such extension through the issuing of a clarification note. In such cases, all rights and obligations of the Central Government Authority/Contracting Authority and the tenderer regarding the original date specified in the contract notice will be subject to the new date.

11. Late Tenders

- 11.1 Economic Operators will not be able to upload a tender offer once the deadline for submission of tenders has expired.
- 11.2 No liability can be accepted for delays or technical difficulties (as per Terms of Use and Manual for Economic Operators of the Government e-Procurement Platform) that preclude tender offers from being submitted in time.

12. Amendments and Withdrawal of Tenders

- 12.1 Tenderers may amend/replace or withdraw their tenders online from www.etenders.gov.mt until the expiry of the deadline for submission. No tender may be amended or withdrawn after the deadline for submission.
- 12.2 The withdrawal of a tender in the period between the deadline for submission and the date of expiry of the validity of the tender will result in forfeiture of the tender guarantee when so provided for in Clause 8 of the Instructions to Tenderers.
- 12.3 In instances where no bid bond is requested and the recommended tenderer withdraws his offer between the deadline for submission and the date of expiry of the validity of the tender, he shall be liable for the payment of any difference between his offer and the awarded offer.

13. Opening of Tenders

- 13.1 Tenders shall be opened in public session at the place and on the date and time indicated in the timetable at Clause 2 of the Instructions to Tenderers (or as otherwise modified in accordance with Clause 10 by the General Contracts Committee or officials from the Contracting Authority, as the case may be. The Summary of Tenders received will be immediately available to view on www.etenders.gov.mt and will also be published on the notice board of the Central Government Authority/Contracting Authority.

- 13.2 At the tender opening session, the tenderers' names, the tender Id, and where applicable the tendered price will be published.

14. *Secrecy of the Procedure*

- 14.1 After the opening of the tenders, no information about the examination, clarification, evaluation or comparison of tenders or decisions about the contract award may be disclosed before the notification of award.
- 14.2 Information concerning checking, explanation, opinions and comparison of tenders and recommendations concerning the award of contract, may not be disclosed to tenderers or any other person not officially involved in the process unless otherwise permitted or required by law. Any attempt by a tenderer to approach any member of the Evaluation Committee, or of the Central Government Authority/Contracting Authority directly during the evaluation period will be considered legitimate grounds for disqualifying his tender.

15. *Clarification of Tenders*

- 15.1 When checking and comparing tenders, the evaluation committee may, after obtaining approval from the Director General (Contracts)/Departmental Contracts Committee, as the case may be, ask a tenderer to clarify any aspect of his tender.
- 15.2 Such requests and the responses to them must be made through the Government's e-Procurement Platform (www.etenders.gov.mt). They may in no circumstances alter or try to change the price or content of the tender, except for rectifications as allowed in terms of Clause 7 of the Instructions to Tenderers or to correct arithmetical errors discovered by the evaluation committee when analysing tenders, in accordance with Clause 17 below.

16. *Tender Evaluation Process*

Without prejudice to what is stated in Clause 9 of these General Rules, the evaluation process is to follow the process established hereunder:

16.1 Part 1: Review of eligibility of tenderers

The Evaluation Committee will check the compliance of tender submissions with the instructions given in the procurement documents, and in particular the documentation

submitted in respect of the requirements detailed in Clause 7¹(A) of the Instructions to Tenderers. The Evaluation Committee can request clarifications and rectifications, in which case the Evaluation Committee shall obtain the prior approval of the Director General (Contracts)/Departmental Contracts Committee. In the case where a rectification is requested this shall be regulated by Notes 1 and 2 in Clause 7 of the Instructions to Tenderers. Rectification/s must be submitted within five (5) working days from notification, and will be free of charge: failure to comply shall result in the tender offer not being considered any further.

Rectifications are classified under Note 2A and 2B as follows:

2A) Tenderers will be requested to either clarify/rectify any incorrect and/or incomplete documentation, and/or submit any missing documents within five (5) working days from notification.

*2B) Tenderers will be requested to rectify/submit only missing documents within five (5) working days from notification. **No changes to the information provided in the Literature submitted will be allowed. Literature submitted shall be rectifiable only in respect of any missing information.***

In evaluating the information submitted by the tenderer following a request for a rectification, the Evaluation Committee must ensure that an economic operator is *ab initio* eligible to qualify for a tender and must consequently be in possession of all the requirements stipulated in the procurement documents by the closing date for the submission of the same.

16.2 **Part 2: Review of exclusion (including Blacklisting) and selection criteria**

Submissions which have been considered as eligible shall be evaluated to ensure compliance with Clause 7(B) of the Instructions to Tenderers. In order to be considered for this evaluation, tenderers must submit the completed European Single Procurement Document (ESPD).

In order for the evaluation committee to carry out the evaluation, it may ask tenderers and candidates during the procedure to submit all or part of the supporting documents where this is necessary to ensure the proper evaluation of the criteria listed under Clause 7(B).

Rectifications are classified under Note 2A and 2B as follows:

2A) Tenderers will be requested to either clarify/rectify any incorrect and/or incomplete documentation, and/or submit any missing documents within five (5) working days from notification.

¹ Wherever Article 7 is being mentioned in this Article, for Call for Quotations (which estimated value is equal or greater than Euro5K), the relative Article is number 4.

2B) Tenderers will be requested to rectify/submit only missing documents within five (5) working days from notification. No changes to the information provided in the Literature submitted will be allowed. Literature submitted shall be rectifiable only in respect of any missing information.

In respect to rectifications and clarifications, the processes established in Clause 16.1, shall *mutatis mutandis* apply to this clause.

16.3 Part 3: Technical Compliance

Submissions which have qualified under Part 2 shall have their technical offer evaluated to ensure compliance with Clause 7(c) of the Instructions to Tenderers. In order to be considered for this Evaluation, tenderers must submit a completed Technical Offer. Literature may also be requested with the technical offer so that the Evaluation Committee will corroborate the technical compliance of the offers.

Without prejudice to the possibility of requesting rectifications on the missing documentation vis-a-vis Literature, if the Literature submitted with the Technical Offer does not corroborate the offer submitted, the tenderer shall be disqualified.

Wherever applicable, tenderers may be requested to submit samples so that the Evaluation Committee will corroborate the technical compliance of the offers received. Without prejudice to the possibility of requesting clarifications, where the samples do not corroborate the offer submitted, the tenderer shall be disqualified.

Rectifications are classified under Note 2A and 2B as follows:

2A) Tenderers will be requested to either clarify/rectify any incorrect and/or incomplete documentation, and/or submit any missing documents within five (5) working days from notification.

2B) Tenderers will be requested to rectify/submit only missing documents within five (5) working days from notification. No changes to the information provided in the Literature submitted will be allowed. Literature submitted shall be rectifiable only in respect of any missing information.

In respect to rectifications and clarifications, the processes established in Clause 16.1, shall *mutatis mutandis* apply to this clause.

In the case of a supplier who is already supplying the product being offered, the tenderer may be exempted from submitting samples and/or Literature. However the specific brand name and the respective reference of the Letter of Acceptance/Contract must be clearly indicated in the tender submission.

No rectification shall be allowed in respect of the documentation as accompanied by Note 3 in Clause 7 of the Instructions to Tenderers. Only clarifications on the submitted information in respect of the latter may be requested. No clarifications shall be allowed where there is no doubt that the submitted technical offer does not comply to the requested specifications.

In respect to rectifications and clarifications, the processes established in Clause 16.1, shall *mutatis mutandis* apply to this clause.

16.4 **Part 4: Financial Evaluation**

Submissions which have qualified under Part 3 shall have their financial offer evaluated to ensure compliance with Clause 7(d) of the Instructions to Tenderers.

The Evaluation Committee will check that the financial offers contain no arithmetical errors as outlined in Clause 17 of these General Rules. Unless otherwise specified in the Instructions to tenderers, if the tender procedure contains several lots, financial offers are compared for each lot. The financial evaluation will have to identify the best financial offer for each lot.

No rectifications shall be allowed in respect of the documentation as accompanied by Note 3 in Clause 7 of the Instructions to Tenderers. Only clarifications on the submitted information in respect of the latter may be eventually requested.

In respect to clarifications, the processes established in Clause 16.1, shall *mutatis mutandis* apply to this clause.

17. **Correction of Arithmetical Errors**

17.1 Admissible tenders will be checked for arithmetical errors by the Evaluation Committee. Without prejudice to other arithmetical errors which may be identified, the following errors will be corrected as follows:

- (a) where there is a discrepancy between amounts in figures and in words, the amount in words will prevail;
- (b) where there is a discrepancy between a unit price and the total amount derived from the multiplication of the unit price and the quantity, the unit price as quoted will prevail;
- (c) where no rate or price has been entered, but a total has been provided, the rate is to be established by dividing the total against the quantity published;
- (d) where a rate or price has been entered, but no total has been inputted, the rate is to be multiplied by the quantity published to derive the total;
- (e) where no rate, price and total are entered against an item in the bill of quantities/financial offer, the financial offer will be deemed as incomplete and

therefore disqualified unless there is specifically stated that the item is included in the Grand Total;

- (f) where there is an error in addition in the Grand Total, the evaluation committee will adjust with the correct amount.

17.2 The amount stated in the tender will be adjusted by the Evaluation Committee in the event of error, and the tenderer will be bound by that adjusted amount. In this regard, the Evaluation Committee shall seek the prior approval of the Director General (Contracts)/Departmental Contracts Committee to communicate the revised price to the tenderer. If the tenderer does not accept the adjustment, his tender will be rejected and his tender guarantee forfeited (if applicable).

17.3 The final tender price, will be determined after adjusting it on the basis of Clause 17.1.

18. *Right of the Central Government Authority / Contracting Authority To Accept Or Reject Any Tender*

18.1 The Central Government Authority/Contracting Authority reserves the right to accept or reject any tender and/or to cancel the whole tender procedure before and after the closing established for the submission of the tenders and/or reject all tenders. The Central Government Authority/Contracting Authority reserves the right to initiate a new invitation to tender.

18.2 In the event of a tender procedure's cancellation, tenderers will be notified by the Central Government Authority/Contracting Authority.

18.3 Cancellation may occur where:

- (a) the tender procedure has been unsuccessful, namely where no qualitatively or financially worthwhile tender has been received or there has been no response at all;
- (b) the economic or technical parameters of the project have been fundamentally altered;
- (c) exceptional circumstances or force majeure render normal performance of the project impossible;
- (d) all technically compliant tenders exceed the financial resources available;
- (e) there have been irregularities in the procedure, in particular where these have prevented fair competition.
- (f) the duration of the evaluation has exceeded the stipulated time limit in clause 8.

In no circumstances will the Central Government Authority/Contracting Authority be liable for damages, whatever their nature (in particular damages for loss of profits) or relationship to the cancellation of a tender, even if the Central Government

Authority/Contracting Authority has been advised of the possibility of damages. The publication of a contract notice does not commit Central Government Authority/Contracting Authority to implement the programme or project announced.

19. Notification of Award, Contract Clarifications

- 19.1 Prior to the expiration of the period of validity of tenders, the Central Government Authority/Contracting Authority will notify the successful tenderer in writing, that his tender has been recommended for award, pending any appeal being lodged in terms of the Public Procurement Regulations (being reproduced in Section 2 of the Tender Document).
- 19.2 Unsuccessful bidders shall be notified with the outcome of the evaluation process, and will be provided the following information:
- (i) the criteria for award;
 - (ii) the name of the successful tenderer;
 - (iii) the recommended price of the successful bidder;
 - (iv) the reasons why the tenderer did not meet the technical specifications/ notification that the offer was not the cheapest,
 - (v) In case where the award criteria is linked to the best price quality ratio the contracting authority must inform the economic operator who has submitted an admissible tender of the characteristics and relative advantages of the selected offer
 - (vi) the deadline for filing a notice of objection (appeal);
 - (vii) the deposit required if lodging an appeal.
- 19.3 The recommendations of the General Contracts Committee/Departmental Contracts Committee shall also be published on the Notice Board of the Central Government Authority/Contracting Authority, and whenever applicable published online through the Government's E-procurement Platform.

20. Contract Signing and Performance Guarantee

- 20.1 After the lapse of the appeals period, and pending that no objections have been received and/or upheld, the successful tenderer is obliged to accept the contract through Government's e-procurement platform within two (2) working days from when he is notified to do so. If the contractor fails to comply with this obligation the Central Government Authority/Contracting Authority can revoke the award and recommend the next bidder. In this circumstance the bidder who has failed to accept the offer through Government's E-Procurement Platform shall forfeit the bid-bond. Where there is no Bid-bond the economic operator shall be liable for the payment of any difference between his offer and the awarded offer.

- 20.2 When the recommendation for award becomes definitive the successful tenderer may be invited to clarify certain contractual questions raised therein. Such clarification will be confined to issues that had no direct bearing on the choice of the successful tender. The outcome of any such clarifications will be set out in a Memorandum of Understanding, to be signed by both parties and incorporated into the contract.
- 20.3 Before the Central Government Authority/Contracting Authority signs the contract with the successful tenderer, the successful tenderer may be requested to provide the documentary proof or statements required to show that it or its sub-contractors does not fall into any of the exclusion situations listed in Tenderer's Declaration of the Tender Response Format. The above mentioned documents must be submitted by every member of a Joint Venture/Consortium (if applicable) and by the sub-contractors.
- 20.4 The Contractor shall, within 10 calendar days of receipt of the contract, sign and date the contract and return it together with a copy of the Performance Guarantee. The Contractor is further obliged to forward the original performance guarantee to the Contracting Authority. The Contracting Authority will not affect any payment to the contractor until the performance guarantee is submitted.
- 20.5 If the selected tenderer fails to sign and return the contract, other required documentation, and any guarantees required within the prescribed periods, the Central Government Authority/Contracting Authority may consider the acceptance of the tender to be cancelled without prejudice to the Central Government Authority/Contracting Authority's right to seize the Bid Bond, claim compensation or pursue any other remedy in respect of such failure, and the successful tenderer will have no claim whatsoever on the Central Government Authority/Contracting Authority. Where the validity of the Bid Bond has expired the economic operator shall be liable for the payment of damages which shall be equal to any difference between the price submitted by him and the price submitted by the awarded offer.
- The tenderer whose tender has been evaluated as second cheapest may be recommended for award, and so on and so forth.
- 20.6 Only the signed contract will constitute an official commitment on the part of the Central Government Authority/Contracting Authority.
- 20.7 Tender guarantees (bid bonds) provided by tenderers who have not been selected shall be released within 30 calendar days from the publication of award/cancellation of tender. The tender guarantee of the successful tenderer shall be released on the signing of the contract, and on submission of a valid performance guarantee.

20.8 The performance guarantee referred to in the General Conditions is set at:

4% where the amount of the contract is between €10,000 and €500,000 excluding VAT, and
10% where the amount of the contract exceeds €500,000 excluding VAT,

and must be presented in the form provided online from the URL www.etenders.gov.mt. The performance guarantee shall be released in accordance with the provisions of the General/Special Conditions of Contracts.

20.9 Economic operators have the possibility to provide the Contracting Authority with a Single Bond covering the performance guarantees for all the contracts **with the same Contracting Authority**. If an additional contract is awarded to a given contractor, which results in an economic operator's current Cumulative Contracts Value to go beyond the contract value range currently covered by the single bond, the contractor is to be requested to: either submit a separate Performance Guarantee for the additional contract; or else submit a new Single Bond to cover the new total contracts value. The following table provides the thresholds to be used in order to determine the single bond value:

Cumulative contracts value range / €		Single bond value / €
From	To	
10,001	150,000	2,000
150,001	320,000	6,000
320,001	500,000	12,800
500,001	750,000	50,000
750,001	1,000,000	75,000
1,000,001	1,500,000	100,000
1,500,001	2,000,000	150,000
2,000,001	3,000,000	200,000
3,000,001	5,000,000	300,000
>5,000,000		500,000

21. Ethics Clauses

21.1 Any attempt by a candidate or tenderer to obtain confidential information, enter into unlawful agreements with competitors or influence the outcome of the procurement procedure during the process of examining, clarifying, evaluating, comparing and the recommendation leading to the award or cancellation of tenders will

result in the rejection of his candidacy or tender and may result in administrative penalties.

- 21.2 Unless otherwise provided for in the procurement documents, when putting forward a candidacy or tender, the candidate or tenderer must declare that he is affected by no potential conflict of interest, and that he has no particular link with other tenderers or parties involved in the project. A false declaration shall lead to the disqualification of the candidate or economic operator. In instances where a state of conflict of interest exists the economic operator or candidate are to be excluded from the award of that particular tender unless such a conflict of interest cannot be remedied by a less intrusive manner.

Where a contracting authority is of the opinion that the conflict of interest can be remedied without excluding the tenderer in question, after obtaining the prior approval of the Director, it shall give three (3) working days to the tenderer in question to remedy such conflict of interest. In default, the tenderer in question shall be excluded.

- 21.4 The tenderer shall refrain from any relationship likely to compromise his independence or that of his staff. If the tenderer ceases to be independent, the Central Government Authority/Contracting Authority may, regardless of injury, exclude the tenderer without further notice and without the tenderer having any claim to compensation.

22. Data Protection and Freedom of Information

- 22.1 Any personal data submitted in the framework of the procurement procedure and/or subsequently included in the contract shall be processed pursuant to **'Data Protection Legislation / Data Protection Regime'**, meaning the Regulation 2016/679 on the protection of natural persons with regard to the processing of personal data and on the free movement of such data (the "GDPR Regulation"), the Electronic Communications Data Protection Directive 2002/58/EC, the Directive 2016/680 on the protection of natural persons with regard to the processing of personal data by competent authorities for the purposes of the prevention, investigation, detection or prosecution of criminal offences or the execution of criminal penalties, and on the free movement of such data (the "Data Directive"), the Electronic Communications Data Protection Directive 2002/58/EC, and all applicable laws and regulations relating to processing of personal data and privacy.

As part of the services, the service provider will be required to process personal data. The service provider confirms that the Services rendered are to be fully compliant to Data Protection Legislation which includes the General Data Protection Regulation (EU) 2016/679 on the protection of natural persons with regard to the procession of personal data and on the free

movement of such data (GDPR), the Data Protection Act (Cap 440), the Electronic Communications Data Protection Directive 2002/58/EC, the Directive 2016/680 on the protection of natural persons with regard to the processing of personal data by competent authorities for the purposes of the prevention, investigation, detection or prosecution of criminal offences or the execution of criminal penalties, and on the free movement of such data (the “ Data Directive”), and all applicable laws and regulations relating to processing of personal data and privacy.

It shall be processed solely for the purposes of the performance, management and follow-up of the procurement procedure and/or subsequent contract by the Central Government Authority/Contracting Authority without prejudice to possible transmission to the bodies charged with a monitoring or inspection task in conformity with National and/or Community law.

- 22.2 The provisions of this tender are without prejudice to the obligations of the Central Government Authority/Contracting Authority in terms of the Freedom of Information Act (Cap. 496 of the Laws of Malta). Unless otherwise provided in the Public Procurement Regulations, the Central Government Authority/Contracting Authority, prior to disclosure of any information to a third party in relation to any provisions of this tender which have not yet been made public, shall consult the tenderer in accordance with the provisions of the said Act, pertinent subsidiary legislation and the Code of Practice issued pursuant to the Act. Such consultation shall in no way prejudice the obligations of the Central Government Authority/Contracting Authority in terms of the Act.

23. Gender Equality

- 23.1 In carrying out his/her obligations in pursuance of this contract, the tenderer shall ensure the application of the principle of gender equality and shall thus *'inter alia'* refrain from discriminating on the grounds of gender, marital status or family responsibilities. Tenderers are to ensure that these principles are manifest in the organigram of the company where the principles aforementioned, including the selection criteria for access to all jobs or posts, at all levels of the occupation hierarchy are amply proven. In this document, words importing one gender shall also include the other gender.