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Tender

Microbiology Automation, including automated Blood Culture, Microbial Identification and Susceptibility Testing Systems

Belfast Health and Social Care Trust
Northern Health and Social Care Trust
South Eastern Health and Social Care Trust
Southern Health and Social Care Trust
Western Health and Social Care Trust
NI Blood Transfusion Service

UK4: Tender notice - Procurement Act 2023 - [view information about notice types](#)

Notice identifier: 2026/S 000-015855

Procurement identifier (OCID): ocds-h6vhtk-0659ae

Published 20 February 2026, 5:13pm

Scope

Description

The Business Services Organisation (BSO) Procurement and Logistics Service (PaLS), on behalf of the Health and Social Care (HSC) Trusts and the Northern Ireland Blood Transfusion Service (NIBTS), invites tenders for the supply of advanced laboratory automation solutions for microbiological testing, including automated Blood Culture, Microbial Identification and Susceptibility Testing Systems.

Total value (estimated)

- £21,622,505 excluding VAT

- £25,947,007 including VAT

Above the relevant threshold

Contract dates (estimated)

- 1 January 2027 to 31 December 2032
- Possible extension to 30 June 2036
- 9 years, 6 months

Description of possible extension:

There is provision for an extension of the contract for any period up to and including 24 months. A further extension of up to 18 months may also be applied; however, this additional 18-month extension may be used solely to facilitate a subsequent procurement competition or to put in place alternative arrangements for the required supplies or services. The estimated Total Value provided includes all potential extensions, as well as any known potential future purchases described within the “Description of Options”.

Options

The right to additional purchases while the contract is valid.

The tender includes options to procure additional equipment where funding becomes available and infrastructure constraints are resolved. Details of known future requirements are included within the tender documentation; however, provision of these items is not currently feasible due to unresolved floor loading and wider infrastructure issues. These potential future purchases will be assessed as part of the tender and may proceed if, and when, the constraints are addressed and funding is secured. The tender also includes provisions for additional quantities and changes to test repertoires. Criteria for additional purchases are set out in the tender documentation and include, but are not limited to, changes in clinical guidance, departmental recommendations, changes in clinical practice, consolidation of testing services, and unforeseen increases in demand.

Main procurement category

Goods

Additional procurement category

Services

CPV classifications

- 33000000 - Medical equipments, pharmaceuticals and personal care products
- 33696000 - Reagents and contrast media
- 33696200 - Blood-testing reagents
- 38000000 - Laboratory, optical and precision equipments (excl. glasses)
- 38400000 - Instruments for checking physical characteristics
- 38434000 - Analysers
- 71900000 - Laboratory services

Justification for not using lots

The requirement has not been divided into lots because the equipment, consumables, and associated services must function as a fully integrated and interoperable system. All components must interface with the same technology and validated workflows, and reagents and consumables are specifically calibrated and approved for use with the supplier's equipment. Servicing and maintenance also require manufacturer authorised personnel. Splitting the requirement into separate lots would risk incompatibility, reduced functionality, and loss of assurance.

Participation

Legal and financial capacity conditions of participation

This tender will assess legal and financial capacity through six pass/fail Conditions of Participation questions.

Technical ability conditions of participation

This tender will assess technical capacity through seven pass/fail Conditions of Participation questions, including the provision of a supplier reference.

Submission

Enquiry deadline

25 March 2026, 3:00pm

Submission type

Requests to participate

Tender submission deadline

1 April 2026, 3:00pm

Submission address and any special instructions

Tenders must be submitted electronically via the eTendersNI platform (<https://etendersni.gov.uk/epps>)

Tenders may be submitted electronically

Yes

Languages that may be used for submission

English

Award decision date (estimated)

30 November 2026

Recurring procurement

Publication date of next tender notice (estimated): 1 January 2034

Award criteria

Name	Type
15 percent	Quality
85 Percent	Price

Weighting description

This tender comprises three pass/fail stages: (1) Exclusion, Debarment and Conditions of Participation; (2) Award Criteria – Mandatory Technical Requirements; and (3) Award Criteria – Design Plan and Dialogue. Stage 4 involves the assessment of Award Criteria – Quality Scored criteria and the financial assessment, weighted 15 percent for Quality and

85 percent for Price.

Other information

Applicable trade agreements

- Government Procurement Agreement (GPA)

Conflicts assessment prepared/revised

Yes

Procedure

Procedure type

Competitive flexible procedure

Competitive flexible procedure description

This procurement consists of five stages, commencing with the publication of this notice. Stage 1 involves the review of Exclusion, Debarment, and Conditions of Participation criteria. Stage 2 comprises the assessment of the Award Criteria – Mandatory Technical Requirements. At Stage 3, suppliers are invited to complete a workflow analysis and provide design and implementation plans; a dialogue phase may be undertaken if required. Suppliers progressing to Stage 4 will submit their final bids, including finalised design and implementation plans, which will be assessed alongside Award Criteria – Quality Scored and Financial bids. Stage 5 concludes the process with contract award.

Justification for not publishing a preliminary market engagement notice

Pre-market engagement took place in 2023 and 2025 under the Public Contracts Regulations 2015, with Prior Information Notices published for transparency (2023/S 000?026578 and 2025/S 000?002465).

Contracting authorities

Belfast Health and Social Care Trust

- Public Procurement Organisation Number: PLQJ-5727-JCLR

A Floor, Belfast City Hospital, Lisburn Road

Belfast

BT9 7AB

United Kingdom

Email: palsgransha.sourcing@hscni.net

Region: UKN06 - Belfast

Organisation type: Public authority - central government

Devolved regulations that apply: Northern Ireland

Northern Health and Social Care Trust

- Public Procurement Organisation Number: PBRP-6676-CQZY

Bretten Hall, Bush Road

Antrim

BT41 2RL

United Kingdom

Email: palsgransha.sourcing@hscni.net

Region: UKN0D - Antrim and Newtownabbey

Organisation type: Public authority - central government

Devolved regulations that apply: Northern Ireland

South Eastern Health and Social Care Trust

- Public Procurement Organisation Number: PLGY-6381-WWWR

Ulster Hospital, Upper Newtownards Rd

Belfast

BT16 1RH

United Kingdom

Email: palsgransha.sourcing@hscni.net

Region: UKN0E - Lisburn and Castlereagh

Organisation type: Public authority - central government

Devolved regulations that apply: Northern Ireland

Southern Health and Social Care Trust

- Public Procurement Organisation Number: PJCC-1957-RCGP

Craigavon Area Hospital, 68 Lurgan Road

Portadown

BT63 5QQ

United Kingdom

Email: palsgransha.sourcing@hscni.net

Region: UKN07 - Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon

Organisation type: Public authority - central government

Devolved regulations that apply: Northern Ireland

Western Health and Social Care Trust

- Public Procurement Organisation Number: PTVW-2397-PWCT

Altnagelvin Area Hospital, Glenshane Road

Londonderry

BT47 6SB

United Kingdom

Email: palsgransha.sourcing@hscni.net

Region: UKN0A - Derry City and Strabane

Organisation type: Public authority - central government

Devolved regulations that apply: Northern Ireland

NI Blood Transfusion Service

- Public Procurement Organisation Number: PTNY-7183-GXBY

Lisburn Road

Belfast

BT9 7TS

United Kingdom

Email: palsgransha.sourcing@hscni.net

Region: UKN06 - Belfast

Organisation type: Public authority - central government

Devolved regulations that apply: Northern Ireland

Other organisation

These organisations are carrying out the procurement, or part of it, on behalf of the contracting authorities.

Business Services Organisations, Procurement and Logistics Service

Summary of their role in this procurement: Business Services Organisation (BSO) Procurement and Logistics Service (PaLS) is facilitating this tender process on behalf of the named Health and Social Care (HSC) Trusts and the Northern Ireland Blood Transfusion Service (NIBTS).

- Public Procurement Organisation Number: PWNJ-1991-NGDW

77 Boucher Crescent

Belfast

BT12 6HU

United Kingdom

Email: Palsgransha.sourcing@hscni.net

Region: UKN06 - Belfast

Contact organisation

Contact [Business Services Organisations, Procurement and Logistics Service](#) for any enquiries.