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Planning

Mersey Ferries - Food & Beverage Services

Merseytravel

UK2: Preliminary market engagement notice - Procurement Act 2023 - [view information about notice types](#)

Notice identifier: 2025/S 000-067644

Procurement identifier (OCID): ocids-h6vhtk-05d204 ([view related notices](#))

Published 22 October 2025, 9:21pm

Scope

Description

Background

Mersey Ferries is a regional icon, an internationally recognised brand, and a living part of Liverpool's maritime heritage featuring on the River Mersey for over 800 years, and a gateway for tourists, commuters, and local families alike.

We are now offering a unique and exciting opportunity for an ambitious and imaginative food and beverage supplier to become part of our journey, as we shape the future of the ferry experience - on board, on land, and beyond.

Every year, we welcome around 480,000 guests annually, on our vessels and through our terminals. Mersey Ferries offer a fantastic range of cruises all year round including a 50-minute River Explorer sightseeing cruise, which departs daily from Liverpool Gerry Marsden terminal at the Pier Head calling at Wirral terminals, Seacombe and Woodside, there is no better way to see Liverpool's famous skyline than from the deck of a Mersey Ferry.

Evening Cruises, fascinating day trips along the Manchester Ship Canal and sightseeing cruises to Liverpool Bay are also set sail throughout the year and give passengers the

opportunity to learn more about the North West's history and experience incredible scenery.

Our audience is diverse and ready for improved hospitality. With £325K turnover for hot drinks, snacks, and bar sales in 2024/25, including daytime and summer evening cruises. Service charges should total £25-30K annually. The Rent/Commission includes an initial free period, followed by incremental increases throughout the contract. Growth is anticipated, particularly with the launch of our new ferry in 2026.

We are looking for a food and beverage partner(s) who sees this as more than a catering contract - but as a platform for innovation, brand storytelling, and customer connection in a truly iconic setting.

Scope

This opportunity is split across three lots, each with its own potential. The tender process is being designed so you can bid for just one, two or all of the lots

- Lot 1a: An onboard café and bar operation on our ferries - serving hot drinks, snacks, light meals, and alcoholic beverages, for daytime cruises and our evening scheduled cruises.
- Lot 1b (optional): A shore side café in the busy and newly refurbished Seacombe, Wirral terminal - with potential to serve both ferry passengers and local residents, commuters, and visitors. The café also serves as the main food and beverage offer for visitors of Eureka Science and Discovery museum.
- Lot 2: A flexible, creative catering offer for our special pop up cruises and events, private charter hires, and themed events - where food, drink and atmosphere help turn journeys into unforgettable experiences.

We are in the process of completing the ITT documentation and full tender pack and we are expecting to launch the tender on or before the 11th November.

Bidders wishing to respond to this tender opportunity once it has launched. We would ask suppliers who are not registered with PROACTIS tender portal to visit below:

<https://procontract.due-north.com/SupplierRegistration/Register>

This will allow you to register for free for not just this future tender opportunity but other public sector tender opportunities.

Once registered you will be able to when this tender launches, review the tender pack and respond and submit a bid.

Total value (estimated)

- £0 excluding VAT
- £0 including VAT

Above the relevant threshold

Contract dates (estimated)

- 19 January 2026 to 18 January 2029
- 3 years

Main procurement category

Services

CPV classifications

- 55300000 - Restaurant and food-serving services
- 55400000 - Beverage-serving services
- 55520000 - Catering services

Contract locations

- UKD72 - Liverpool

Engagement

Engagement deadline

11 November 2025

Engagement process description

There is no opt in process or any further action needed , other than registration on the tender portal at this stage. Once the tender is launched a notice will be put out for bidders to respond to.

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Participation

Particular suitability

Small and medium-sized enterprises (SME)

Submission

Publication date of tender notice (estimated)

11 November 2025

Procedure

Special regime

Concession

Contracting authority

Merseytravel

- Public Procurement Organisation Number: PJQR-8469-DXQD

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Liverpool

L3 1BP

United Kingdom

Email: Procurement@liverpoolcityregion-ca.gov.uk

Region: UKD72 - Liverpool

Organisation type: Public authority - sub-central government