**Project title: NHS National Framework for the supply of Tocilizumab Injection - 01 March 2026**

**Offer reference number: CM/TNS/25/5723**

**Period of framework: 1 March 2026 to 31 August 2027 with an option or options to extend (at the Authority’s discretion) for a period or periods up to a total of 24 months.**

**Published By: Medicines Procurement and Supply Chain - NHS Medicines Value & Access, NHS England**

1. **Terms of offer**

1.1 NHS England, (‘Authority’) is conducting this procurement exercise as a centralised procurement authority to establish a framework agreement (the ‘Framework Agreement’) for and on behalf of the Participating Authorities with whom the Offerors appointed to the Framework Agreement (‘Successful Offerors’) may ultimately enter into contracts under the Framework Agreement for the supply of the goods and/or services. The Participating Authorities are the organisations specified in Schedule 8 (*Participating Authorities*) of Document No. 03 Framework Agreement and Terms and Conditions.

1.2 The Authority will not be a party to any such subsequent contracts under the Framework Agreement. In accordance with the Procurement Act 2023 (“Act”), each Participating Authority is and shall remain solely responsible for the conduct of its award of contracts under the Framework Agreement, including (but not limited to) fulfilling the requirements imposed by Section 45 of the Act when conducting an award of contract(s) under the Framework Agreement.

1.3 The Authority is not responsible or accountable for and shall have no liability whatsoever in relation to:

1.3.1 The conduct of any Participating Authorities in relation to the Framework Agreement;

1.3.2 the acts or omissions of any Participating Authority in connection with any contract between the successful Offeror and any Participating Authority entered into pursuant to the Framework Agreement; or

1.3.3 The performance or non-performance of a contract between the successful Offeror and any Participating Authority entered into pursuant to the Framework Agreement.

1.4 Offerors taking part in this competition consent to the terms set out in this Invitation to Offer as part of the competition process.

**2. The Framework Agreement**

2.1 This procurement exercise concerns the establishment of a Framework Agreement under which one or more successful Offerors will be appointed to supply goods and/or services on the terms agreed to such of the Participating Authorities as may place orders for such goods and/or services from time to time.

2.2 The Authority cannot mandate any Participating Authority to place any orders or any particular level of orders, nor can it require them to place orders with particular successful Offerors. It follows that the Authority can give no warranty that any successful Offeror will receive any business or any particular level of business under the Framework Agreement.

2.3 Any volume estimates provided to Offerors by Authority are statements of opinion, provided in good faith and based on past experience and market knowledge, but they should not be relied upon by Offerors in formulating their offers.

2.4 By submitting an Offer, an Offeror is deemed to acknowledge and agree that:

2.4.1 the supply of goods and/or services under any Framework Agreement resulting from this procurement exercise is not an exclusive arrangement; and

2.4.2 notwithstanding the establishment of any Framework Agreement pursuant to this procurement exercise, the Authority and/or any of the Participating Authorities may at any time purchase goods and/or services from (and/or enter into other contracts and/or framework agreements with) any third party that are the same as, or similar to, the goods and/or services described in the Document No. 05a(i) and Document No. 05b(i) of the tender pack.

**3. Information and confidentiality**

3.1 Information that is supplied to Offerors as part of the procurement exercise is supplied in good faith. However, Offerors must satisfy themselves as to the accuracy of such information and no responsibility is accepted for any loss or damage of whatever kind or howsoever caused or arising from the use by the Offerors of such information (including but not limited to any claim in tort (including negligence), contract or quasi-contract, restitution or other equitable claim, breach of statutory duty, misrepresentation, judicial review or other public law remedy, or any other type of claim whatsoever) unless such information has been supplied fraudulently by the Authority.

3.2 All information supplied to Offerors by the Authority in connection with this procurement exercise shall be regarded as confidential. By receiving information in any manner whatsoever in relation to this procurement exercise, Offerors agree to be bound by the obligation to preserve the confidentiality of all such information.

* 1. All Central Government Departments and their Executive Agencies and Non- Departmental Public Bodies are subject to control and reporting within Government. In particular, they report to the Cabinet Office and HM Treasury for all expenditure. Further, the Cabinet Office has a cross-Government role delivering overall Government policy on public procurement - including ensuring value for money and related aspects of good procurement practice.
  2. For these purposes, the Authority may disclose within Government any of the Offeror’s documentation or information (including any that the Offeror considers to be confidential and/or commercially sensitive such as specific bid information) submitted by the Offeror to the Authority during this Procurement. The information will not be disclosed outside Government (other than as required by the Freedom of Information Act 2000 or other legal obligation).

3.5 This invitation and its accompanying documents shall remain the property of the Authority and shall be returned to the Authority on demand.

**4. Freedom of Information Act 2000**

4.1 The Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA) and the Environmental Information Regulations 2004 (EIR) (referred to together below as (“IA”) apply to the Authority.

## 4.2 Offerors should be aware of the Authority’s obligations and responsibilities under the IA to disclose, on request, recorded information held by the Authority. Information provided by Offerors in connection with this procurement exercise, or in connection with any Framework Agreement that may be concluded as a result of this exercise, may therefore have to be disclosed by the Authority in response to such a request, unless the Authority decides that one of the statutory exemptions under the IA applies. The Authority may also include certain information in the NHS England freedom of information publication scheme. Further information can be found at <https://www.england.nhs.uk/contract-us/pub-scheme>

4.3 In certain circumstances, and in accordance with the Code of Practice issued under section 45 of the FOIA and/or the EIR, the Authority may consider it appropriate to ask Offerors for their views as to the release of any information before a decision on how to respond to a request is made. In dealing with requests for information under the IA, the Authority must comply with a strict timetable and the Authority would, therefore, expect a timely response to any such consultation within five working days (a working day being any day of the week from Monday to Friday excluding Bank holidays in England).

4.4 If Offerors provide any information to the Authority in connection with this procurement exercise, or with any Framework Agreement that may be concluded as a result of this exercise, which is confidential in nature and which an Offeror wishes to be held in confidence, then Offerors must clearly identify in their offer documentation the information to which Offerors consider a duty of confidentiality applies. Offerors must give a clear indication which material is to be considered confidential and why it is considered to be so, along with the time period for which it is requested to remain confidential in nature. Such indications by Offerors shall also include the section number in IA for the applicable exemption and where the proposed exemption is classified as a qualified exemption under IA, Offerors must indicate clearly why they think that the result of the public interest test applicable under IA should be that the information is exempt. This information should be listed in Document No.8 (Confidential Information Schedule). The use of blanket protective markings such as “commercial in confidence” will not be appropriate. In addition, marking any material as “confidential” or equivalent should not be taken to mean that the Authority accepts any duty of confidentiality by virtue of such marking. Please note that even where an Offeror has indicated that information is confidential, the Authority may be required to disclose it under the IA if a request is received.

4.5 The Authority cannot accept that trivial information or information which by its very nature cannot be regarded as confidential should be subject to any obligation of confidence.

4.6 In certain circumstances where information has not been provided in confidence, the Authority may still wish to consult with Offerors about the application of any other exemption such as that relating to disclosure that will prejudice the commercial interests of any party.

4.7 The decision as to which information will be disclosed is reserved entirely to the Authority, notwithstanding any consultation with Offerors.

**5. Right to publish – Transparency agenda**

5.1 By submitting an Offer, an Offeror is deemed to acknowledge and agree that, except for any information which is exempt from disclosure in accordance with the provisions of the IA, this Invitation to Offer and the content of any Framework Agreement resulting from this procurement exercise will be published in accordance with the Act and/or the Government's policies on transparency as expounded in the Guidance published by the Cabinet Office. Further information on transparency can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/policies/buying-and-managing-government-goods-and-services-more-efficiently-and-effectively>

5.2 The Authority shall be ultimately and solely responsible for determining whether any of the content of this Invitation to Offer and any Framework Agreement that is concluded as a result of this procurement exercise is exempt from disclosure in accordance with the provisions of the IA.

**6. Samples**

6.1 Offerors will not be required to submit physical samples of each item offered against this tender at this time, however the Authority retains the right to request samples should the Authority decide they will be required. Any such samples shall be provided free of charge.

6.2 Pharmaceutical Quality Assessments, where required, will be made against the most current uploaded files on PharmaQC.

* 1. Offerors must fully register any offered item on PharmaQC (the Authority’s electronic application for gathering product details and organising QA assessments). All required information/images for quality assurance assessment must be uploaded to PharmaQC by tender close otherwise it will invalidate your offer and in such circumstances your offer will not be considered or evaluated any further.

6.4 Please refer to Document No. 04 Quality Assurance Process which details all requirements for Pharma QC registration and product images. All product image uploads must be clear, legible and unambiguous.

6.5 It is the full responsibility of Offerors to make sure that the images uploaded to PharmaQC represent the offered item(s) and are registered against the offered NPCode.

**7. Prices**

7.1 Prices must be stated in the offer schedules and must remain open for acceptance until **90** days from the closing date for the receipt of offers.

7.2 Prices must be firm (i.e. not subject to variation) for the duration of any Framework Agreement that may result from this procurement exercise subject only to any variation provisions contained in the Framework Agreement and documents incorporated within it.

7.3 Prices must be quoted in sterling (GBP) and exclusive of Value Added Tax.

7.4 Prices for offered products must be inclusive of delivery to the Participating Authority as required in Document No. 03, Schedule 2 of the “Call-Off Terms and Conditions”.

**8. Offer documentation and submission**

8.1 Offers may be submitted for all goods and/or services or for selected items.

8.2 The goods and/or services offered by Offerors must be [offered and supplied] strictly in accordance with Document No. 04 – Quality Assurance Process. Goods and/or services of essential similarity may be offered but all differences between such items and the Specification must be indicated in detail in the Offer schedule.

8.3 `MPSC’s Selectt programme shall be used by Offerors to create the offer documents for this procurement exercise. Instructions on accessing and using this system can be found at the following web link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/drugs-and-pharmaceutical-supplier-tender-submission>

8.4 Offers must comprise:

8.4.1 the completed Response form on the Atamis website – found under “My Proposals and Quotes”

8.4.2 The offer schedule in. cmu format – Document No. 05a(i) of the tender pack, Selectt bid file(s), with the titles respectively:

CM\_TNS\_25\_5723\_01\_xxx.cmu

Where xxx represents your organisations’ tendering supplier code:

8.4.3 the Form of Offer (Document No. 06 to be completed on the Atamis website)

8.4.4 the uploading of the relevant documentation and information to PharmaQC as required by section 6 of this Document No.02 and Document No.4 Quality Assurance Process

8.4.5 the Quality control technical sheet (Document No. 07 to be completed on the Atamis website)

8.4.6 the Confidential Information Schedule (Document No. 08), if any types of information are considered to be confidential by the Offeror;

8.4.7 a statement of prompt settlement discounts, if available;

8.4.8 details of the Offeror’s ability, if any, to trade electronically;

8.4.9 Confirmation that any information previously supplied to the Authority in connection with the offer is still accurate and is incorporated by reference into the offer.

8.5 The Form of offer must be approved via the Authority’s electronic tendering system by an officer duly authorised by the Offeror.

8.6 The Form of Offer and other documents referred to in paragraph 9.4 above must be completed in full. Any offer may be rejected which -

8.6.1 contains gaps, omissions or obvious errors; or

8.6.2 is received after the closing time and date for the receipt of offers.

8.7 For clarification in completing the offer documentation, or commercial and/or technical queries please send a message via the Atamis messaging portal: health.atamis.co.uk

Please note that any queries raised by Offerors and the responses to those queries by the Authority may be published anonymously to all Offerors to ensure transparency, fairness and equal treatment of Offerors throughout the procurement exercise. If you are concerned that your query and/or the response to it may disclose confidential information or information which is commercially damaging to you, then you may submit the query marked "Confidential" and setting out clearly the reasons why you believe that the query and/or the response are or will be confidential or commercially damaging. The Authority will consider your request and make its decision at its sole discretion. If the Authority determines that the query or response should not be disclosed to other Offerors, it will answer your query and not disclose it or the response (as appropriate) to the other Offerors. If the Authority determines that the query and/or the response should be disclosed to other Offerors, it will give you the chance either to withdraw your query or have it answered. If the latter, then the Authority will disclose the query and the response to all other Offerors.

8.8 Offers and all documents relating to the offers must be written in English and submitted to the Authority via the Authority’s electronic tendering system by **Wednesday 5th November 2025**

# **9. The Authority’s Rights**

9.1 The Authority reserves the right to:

9.1.1 waive or change the requirements of this Invitation to Offer from time to time without prior (or any) notice being given by the Authority;

9.1.2 seek clarification or documents in respect of an Offeror's submission;

9.1.3 disqualify any Offeror that does not submit a compliant Offer in accordance with the instructions in this Invitation to Offer;

9.1.4 disqualify any Offeror that is guilty of serious misrepresentation in relation to its Offer or the procurement process;

* + 1. withdraw this Invitation to Offer at any time, or re-invite Offers on the same or any alternative basis;
    2. accept an Offer either in whole or in part, each item being for this purpose treated as offered separately;
    3. choose not to award any Framework Agreement as a result of the procurement process for any reason;
    4. make whatever changes it sees fit to the timetable, structure or content of the procurement process, depending on approvals processes or for any other reason; and/or
    5. at any time terminate the procurement process for any reason.

**10. Warnings and disclaimers**

10.1 While the information contained in this Invitation to Offer is believed to be correct at the time of issue, neither the Authority, its employees or advisors, nor any Participating Authority accept any liability for its accuracy, adequacy or completeness, nor will any express or implied warranty be given. This exclusion extends to liability in relation to any statement, opinion or conclusion contained in or any omission from this Invitation to Offer and in respect of any other written or oral communication transmitted (or otherwise made available) to any Offeror. This exclusion does not extend to any fraudulent misrepresentation made by or on behalf of the Authority.

10.2 If an Offeror proposes to enter into a Framework Agreement with the Authority, it must rely on its own enquiries and on the terms and conditions set out in the Framework Agreement(s) (as and when finally executed), subject to the limitations and restrictions specified in it.

10.3 Neither the issue of this Invitation to Offer, nor any of the information presented in it, should be regarded as an offer, commitment or representation on the part of the Authority (or any other person) to enter into a contractual arrangement.

**11.**  **Contract award criteria and award methodology**

11.1**Award Criteria**

11.1.1 Any Framework Agreement(s) awarded as a result of this procurement shall be awarded to the Offeror(s) that submit the most advantageous tender (MAT) as assessed on the basis described in this Invitation to Offer. The award criteria are set out in paragraph 11.1.3 and Table 1 below. Where a Framework Agreement award is made, each Product within the Lot shall be awarded separately; i.e. each Product within the Lot will form a separate single Offeror framework arrangement.

11.1.2 Any award(s) shall be made in accordance with:

1. the award criteria described at paragraph 11.1.3 below;
2. the award methodology described at paragraph 11.2 below; and

on the basis of the lowest cost solution for the Authority for all of the Lots being tendered (for the Product), where cost is calculated by multiplying the offer price tendered by the Offeror (for the Product) by the estimated volumes for the Lot being tendered for the Product (anticipated for the duration of the Framework Agreement excluding any extension period) for the Product.

11.1.3 For each Product, the award criteria are as follows:

(a) **Price criteria of:**

1. sub-criterion (1) - Cost of product;

(b) **Qualitative criteria of:**

1. sub-criterion (1) – Quality Assurance Process

11.1.4 The Award Criteria for this procurement are:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Criterion** | **Sub-Criterion** | **Debrief Explanation** |
| **Price** | **Sub-criterion (1)**  Cost of product | The successful Offeror(s) offered the lowest-priced compliant offer. |
| **Sub-criterion (2)**  Cost of Change  The successful Offeror’s product provides the most advantageous offer when the costs associated with change are taken into consideration.  Examples of indicators of costs of change may include (but shall not be limited to) the following:   * The costs associated with updating pharmacy ordering and stock-holding systems. * The costs associated with segregating products stocked to avoid co-dispensing where this might be problematic, e.g. two products to one patient. * The costs associated with changing any ancillary documentation that might be associated with a particular product, e.g. patient information cards, work cards etc. * The costs associated with assessing and promulgating information pertaining to any specific changes associated with a given product, e.g. storage, handling, differences in excipients or salts or differences in preparation or use of the product.   The costs associated with explaining any differences between products to the patient, e.g. changes in pack presentation, excipients etc. | **Not applicable to this framework.** |
| **Quality** | **Sub-criterion (1)**  **Assessed according to the requirements disclosed in:**   * **Document No. 04 – Quality Assurance Process** | The successful Offeror’s product and packaging are in accordance with the criteria detailed in Document No. 04 - Quality Assurance Process |
|  | **Sub-criterion (2)**  **Supply route and associated cost** | **Not applicable to this framework.** |
|  | **Sub-criterion (3)**  **“Extended Stability Data”**  **Assessed according to the requirements disclosed in:**  **Document No. 04 Quality Assurance Process** | **Not applicable to this framework.** |
|  | **Sub-criterion (4) “Additional Specification Requirements”**  **Assessed according to the requirements disclosed in:**  **Offers that are confirmed by the evaluation panel as meeting the requirements will be deemed acceptable for award to the framework (subject to satisfying all other award criteria). Offers that are confirmed by the evaluation panel as not meeting the requirements will not be deemed acceptable for award to the framework. At the discretion of the adjudicating panel the product will only be awarded to the framework in the absence of any other qualifying offers (and subject to satisfying all other award criteria).** | **Not applicable to this framework.** |

* 1. **Award Methodology**

**11.2.1 Identification of Lowest Priced Compliant Offers**

In respect of **each Product** the evaluation shall comprise the following:

1. all (compliant) offers (for the Product) for that Lot will initially be ranked on Price against the price criteria (being Price sub-criterion (1)). Such highest-ranking offers (for the Product) for the Lot shall be the Lowest Priced Offers for the purposes of this paragraph 11.2.1.
2. the Lowest Priced Offer(s) shall then be assessed against the requirements and the quality criteria (being Quality sub-criterion (1) and (2)) according to the approach documented in Document No.4 'Quality Assurance Process'. Where the Product does not comply with the requirements variously disclosed in these documents then the Product will not be deemed acceptable for award to a Framework Agreement and may be deemed invalid. Additionally, for the avoidance of doubt the requirements described in Document No. 04 ‘Quality Assurance Process’ specifically apply. Where the Product does not comply with the requirements disclosed in this document then the Product will not be deemed acceptable for award to a Framework Agreement and may be deemed invalid.
3. where the Lowest Priced Offer(s):
4. fulfils the quality award criteria (being Quality sub-criterion (1) and (2)), such offers (for the Product) for the Lot shall be the **Lowest Priced Compliant Offer(s)** for the purposes of this paragraph 11.2;
5. fails to fulfil the quality award criteria (being Quality sub-criterion (1) and (2)), such offer shall be deemed non-compliant and shall be rejected.

11.3**Evaluation Panel**

Offers shall be evaluated by an evaluation panel against the award criteria. The evaluation panel may comprise members of the NHS England Medicines Procurement and Supply Chain and Medicines Value and Access team, the Pharmaceutical Market Support Group, NHS Trust pharmacy procurement group representatives, NHS England commissioners and clinical experts.

11.4 **Final Decision to Award**

11.4.1 Following evaluation of Offers in accordance with the evaluation process set out in this Invitation to Offer, the Offeror(s) who offer the most advantageous Offer(s) shall be awarded the Framework Agreement for each Product in the relevant Lot.

11.4.2 The most advantageous tenders for a particular Product in the relevant Lot shall be the Offers satisfying the award criteria and evaluation process set out in this Invitation to Offer.

11.4.3 Once the Authority has decided to make an award of a Framework Agreement the Authority will inform the successful Offeror(s), along with all other tenderers via the Atamis eTendering Portal of its intention to award a Framework Agreement and will allow an eight-working day standstill period in accordance with section 51 of the Act.

11.4.5 At any time following a standstill period of eight working days, subject always to paragraph 10 above (and subject to there being no substantive challenge to that intention), a Framework Agreement shall be formally awarded, subject to contract, to the successful Offeror(s).

1. **E-auctions**

This tender will not include an electronic reverse auction stage.

1. **Contract monitoring**

The Authority is committed to helping improve the efficiency of contracted Offerors through sharing information on performance measurement. The criteria for measuring performance shall be agreed with the Successful Offerors and formally documented. It is possible that measurement criteria will develop during the term of the Framework Agreement - this will also be documented following agreement with the Successful Offerors.

1. **Costs and expenses**

The Authority will not be liable for any bid costs, expenditure, work or effort incurred by any Offeror in proceeding with or participating in this procurement, including if the procurement process is terminated or amended by the Authority.

1. **Amendments to Invitation to offer**

15.1 At any time prior to the closing time and date for the return of offers, the Authority may modify the documents comprising the Invitation to offer by notifying Offerors of the same in writing.

15.2 The Authority may extend the closing time and date for the return of offers to allow for significant amendments made by the Authority to be fully assessed and taken into account by Offerors.

1. **Procurement exercise timetable**

The following is the anticipated timetable for the procurement exercise and Offerors should note that these dates are indicative and are subject to change upon notice from the Authority. Offerors should also note and observe the timetable for the receipt of clarification queries under this procurement exercise as shown on the Atamis website.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Tender Stage** | **Estimated Date** |
| Tender Documents Returned to MPSC via Atamis | By 13:00 hours 5th November 2025 |
| Evaluation Period | Early November |
| Award notification issued to Offerors | 27 November 2025 |
| Agreement Commences | 01 March 2026 |

**17. Continuity of Supply post-Award of Framework Agreements**

17.1 By participating in this procurement process, Offerors acknowledge and agree that the processes set out in this section 17 and in the relevant provisions of the Framework Agreement referred to above constitute a permitted modification under section 74 of the Act, which fully satisfies the requirements of Schedule 8 paragraph 1 (“provided for in the contract”) of the Act.

17.2 Offerors should also note the contract terms contained within the Framework Agreement which are aimed at achieving continuity of supply and avoiding / minimising supply failures. In particular, these include:

17.2.1 Clauses 15 and 16 of Schedule 1 – Initial Stock Level and Contract Stock Level – condition precedent;

17.2.2 Clause 19 of Schedule 1 – Stock Level Failure and Reporting;

17.2.3 Clause 20 of Schedule 2 – Service Failures; and

17.2.4 the Key Performance Indicators set out at Schedule 5 Part A of the Framework Agreement.

Should Offerors fail to meet the performance levels specified in the Framework Agreement then the sanctions specified in the Framework Agreement may apply.

If the failure is such that one or more Warning Notices are issued, then in addition to the sanctions prescribed in Clause 24 of the Framework Agreement and in Schedule 5 Part A, the Authority may (in relation to future procurements) where appropriate treat the issue of a Warning Notice in accordance with paragraph 12(3) of Schedule 7 of the Act, which provides NHS England with the discretion to exclude an Offeror if the Offeror has not performed a relevant contract to the regulated authority’s satisfaction, was given proper opportunity to improve performance, and failed to do so.

Offerors should also note that paragraphs 12(1) and 12(2) of Schedule 7 of the Act provide for discretionary exclusion grounds where there has been a sufficiently serious breach of a relevant contract. Pursuant to paragraph 12(4) of Schedule 7 of the Act, a discretionary exclusion ground also applies to an Offeror if a contracting authority (including NHS England) has published information under section 71(5) of the Act (concerning either breach or poor performance) in respect of the Offeror, including in circumstances where the breach leads to full termination of the contract.

Where any of the above discretionary exclusion grounds apply, the Authority may choose to disregard the Offeror’s tender in accordance with Section 26 (and where applicable exclude the Offeror from the procurement in accordance with Sections 27 and/or 28), subject to the requirements of Section 58 of the Act (which include a requirement to provide Offerors with reasonable opportunity to demonstrate “self-cleaning”).