



REQUEST FOR TENDERS

For

Programme Support Services for the *safefood* Knowledge Network

safefood
7 Eastgate Avenue
Eastgate
Little Island
Cork.

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Request for Tender

1. Introduction

safefood invites tenders from external organisations (either public or private sector) to provide programme support services for our Knowledge Network. The successful tenderer will designate one individual to act as a Programme Administrator and to fulfil the requirements specified in Section 3.

safefood was established in 1999 under the British-Irish Agreement Act, and is one of the six North-South Implementation Bodies jointly governed by the British and Irish Governments.

The remit of **safefood** is to promote awareness of food safety and healthy eating issues throughout the food chain and on an island of Ireland (IoI) basis, which includes the commissioning and funding of relevant research, the coordination of scientific cooperation including identifying and establishing laboratory linkages, public education and awareness campaigns, and the publication of independent reports of interest to consumers and other key stakeholders.

The Chief Executive Officer is supported by an Advisory Board that provides strategic advice, and an Advisory Committee that provides scientific and technical guidance on matters of food safety and healthy eating. The membership of both structures comprises a broad range of expertise and backgrounds from the Public, Private and Voluntary sectors across the IoI.

Headquarters are located at 7 Eastgate Avenue, Eastgate, Little Island, Co. Cork, with an additional office in the Irish Life Centre, Abbey Court, Lower Abbey Street, Dublin, and a sub-office at The Gasworks, 5 Cromac Avenue, Belfast BT7 2JA.

The Request for Tender relates to the provision of services based in the Cork Headquarters. However, it is noted that the programme administrator will need to attend events and visit stakeholders across the IoI, as well as attending meetings in **safefood's** Cork, Dublin and Belfast offices.

For more information on **safefood**, please see our web site at www.safefood.eu.

2. Overview of the **safefood** Knowledge Networks

As part of its legislative remit, **safefood** has an obligation to promote awareness of food safety issues amongst professionals with an interest in, or responsibility for, food safety, including the food industry. Food safety is critical at all stages of the food chain – on the farm, during processing, storage and distribution, at retail and catering levels, and in the hands of the consumer. Food safety is the central pillar on which the reputation and sustainability of the agri-food sector are built. It is the key element that underpins food production ensuring that consumer expectations are met and that the highest levels of public health continue to be assured.

safefood established the Knowledge Network (KN) Programme to link food safety professionals across the IoI and throughout the whole food chain including food producers and processors, as well as those working in the wider public sector, research and academia. The network helps to facilitate greater knowledge sharing by those involved in all parts of the food chain to support and enhance food safety. The current programme will run from May 2019 to May 2022.

The **safefood** KN explores current food safety issues, identifies new risks and emerging challenges and facilitates more rapid dissemination of information and ideas. It allows early access to on-going and completed research acting as a catalyst for industry-focused food safety research and innovation. The overarching goal of the KN is to ensure that consumers can continue to have confidence in the food they eat.

The KN membership includes food safety professionals from across the health, food industry, academia, government and agriculture arenas on the IoI. To date, the KN has attracted more than 3,000 members who are benefiting from the various services provided including (a) a dedicated online platform that facilitates dissemination of up-to-date food safety information and online discussion, (b) attendance at conferences and workshops covering a wide variety of food safety themes, (c) a monthly eNewsletter with updates on KN activities and a KN magazine called 'The Food Chain' which is published three times per year. KN members are also eligible to apply for bursaries from the **safefood** Food Safety Skills Fund to enable members to develop broader experience through visits to centres of excellence and conferences under the different KN topics.

There has been a clear recognition that the KN programme has facilitated a wide range of different food safety professionals forming multidisciplinary linkages in the food safety arena, gaining access to scientific information and shared knowledge, and especially developing synergies both within the KN framework and externally. The KN has also helped food businesses and producers keep abreast of potential and emerging food safety and authenticity risks in relation to their supply chains.

3. Details of Requirements

safefood is tendering for programme support services, whereby a designated individual will be responsible for event logistics, KN promotion, uploads to the KN website, contributing to the KN newsletters and also acting as secretariat to the expert group. The contract will be for three years with a formal review every 12 months.

The services required will include:

1. Operational planning and reporting, including acting as the central information and dissemination point for all KN activity, secretariat services for the in-house KN Steering Group, and provide regular reports on activities and progress
2. Organising all aspects of the programme of events agreed by **safefood**, including booking suitable venues and catering, sourcing and arranging speakers, managing registration, printing promotional and other materials as required, arranging audio/visual services, and organising delegate packs.
3. Supporting the KN website and publications, including updating the website (training and support provided), publishing the monthly e-newsletter and supporting the production of The Food Chain magazine.
4. Providing professional secretariat services for the expert group, including all meeting logistics, the preparation of the agenda, reports and other documentation in advance of meetings, minute-taking and preparation of minutes, and following up on agreed actions; and liaising between **safefood** personnel and the expert group in the development and delivery of all aspects of the KN work programme;

5. Developing a targeted promotional and marketing plan, in collaboration with **safefood**, to expand the KN membership and to raise the profile of the KNs among key stakeholders in industry, research and government;

Please note that this is a tender for services, and will not lead to a contract of employment with *safefood*.

5. Budget

Tenderers are invited to submit a competitive bid. Please provide a full breakdown of costs including VAT, where applicable. Note that any travel and subsistence will be payable by **safefood**.

safefood shall monitor progress of the KN on an ongoing basis, and carry out a formal review of the programme support services after 12 months. Funding for the subsequent year is contingent on the successful accomplishment of the deliverables outlined in the contract.

6. Time commitment

The programme administrator must be available to **safefood** four days per week, and will be sited in the Cork HQ in Little Island. They will report to the Chief Specialist Food Science in **safefood**.

There will be a requirement to travel to events across the island of Ireland throughout the year.

6. Evaluation of Tenders

6.1 Qualification Criteria

Tenderers will be initially evaluated by reference to the following qualification criteria:

- a) Addressing in full the requirements set out in this document; stated ability to meet all requirement, especially in event management
- b) Previous experience of the administration of programmes
- c) Inclusion of all information requested.

Only those proposals, which satisfy all of the above qualifying criteria, will be eligible for further evaluation.

6.2 Award Criteria

The contract will be awarded from the qualifying tenders on the basis of the most economically advantageous tender by applying the following award criteria:

- a) Comprehensive understanding of requirements in relation to the provision of requirements;
- b) Proven experience in stakeholder management, including engaging with diverse audiences, as well as developing and implementing promotional plans;
- c) Proven experience in providing professional secretariat services, minute taking and report writing;
- d) Proven experience in event management, including planning, logistics, scheduling, marketing, etc.;
- e) Proven experience in programme management, including planning and achieving business goals and efficient administration of programme activities;
- f) Demonstrated ability to manage information, including sourcing and disseminating information to a diverse audience through appropriate channels;
- g) Profile of the designated individual: in order to fulfil the above criteria, the designated individual should have five years' experience in event management, administration with excellent communication and analytical skills;
- h) Overall cost of the proposal on offer;

Award of contract will be subject to a clarification meeting. It is desirable that the key personnel assigned to this contract is available and present at this meeting.

It is anticipated that these meetings will be held during the week commencing 1st April 2019.

In the event that the key person to act as the programme administrator is not in place at the time that the contract is awarded, it shall be a condition of the contract that a **safefood** representative will sit on the panel for the recruitment of the programme administrator.

7. Information Required

All tenders must include the following:

- a) Full name of business/institution and contact details including business name and telephone number, full address, telephone number, web site address (where available) and contact person dealing with this request (including contact details);
- b) Full details of staffing levels (full-time and/or part-time) proposed to deliver the tender requirements;
- c) Name, and details of relevant prior experience, of the one designated individual with overall responsibility for delivery of the tender requirements, where available;
- d) A list of existing customers with contact names for at least two sites where similar services have been provided;
- e) The full cost of the proposal including appropriate cost breakdown. Costs should be submitted in Euro only and VAT should be separately stated.

8. Conditions of Tender

- a) **safefood** requires that all information provided pursuant to this invitation to tender be treated in strict confidence by tenderers;
- b) Information supplied by tenderers will be treated as contractually binding. However, **safefood** reserves the right to seek clarification or verification of any such information;
- c) Before any tender is awarded, the successful tenderer will be required to provide a valid Tax Clearance Certificate from the Revenue Commissioners, evidence of insurance cover and a copy of their Data Protection Policy;
- d) **safefood** will not be liable in respect of any costs incurred by tenderers in the preparation of proposals or any associated work effort;
- e) Any conflict or potential conflict of interest must be fully disclosed;
- f) The tender should be emailed to lgordon@safefood.eu on or before 4pm on Friday 22nd March 2019;
- g) Applicants may be required to attend a presentation / clarification meeting in our Cork office and this is provisionally scheduled to be held during the week commencing 1st April 2019;
- h) Tenders delivered late will not be considered. In addition, incomplete tenders may be rejected;

- i) Any queries should be **emailed only** to lgordon@safefood.eu as the etenders mailbox **will not** be monitored;

- j) Tenderers are advised that any responses supplied in respect of further information requested will be distributed to all other parties who have participated in this Request for Tender;

- k) The decision of **safefood** will be final.