

ATHLONE TOWN COUNCIL

ATHLONE CASTLE

Main Contractors/Specialist Contractors

1) Introduction:

The Employer is Athlone Town Council which wishes to engage a Main Building Contractor with experience in building conservation works, a Fit-out Contractor with named Specialist Contractors, AV Software Contractors and Graphic Art Works Contractors to enhance and upgrade the Athlone Castle Visitor Centre and Museum.

2) Background:

Athlone Castle with its origins in the 13th century is a National Monument and a Protected Structure within the Town Development Plan. A Visitor Centre was developed within the Castle and opened in 1991 and includes audio visual presentations on a variety of themes. It is now proposed to enhance and upgrade the Centre.

3) Location:

The Castle is located in the heart of Athlone on the banks of the Shannon, immediately beside the Town Bridge, Market Square and the Docks.

The Castle may be inspected by interested contractors with reasonable notice.

4) Description of Project:

The Project requires the demolition of a number of modern structures within the Courtyard, the construction of new buildings and a number of interventions to the primary structure and the surfacing/paving of the ramp and courtyard.

It will also include the fit out of the various buildings and the provision of AV hardware and software, graphic productions, mounts and manual interactives to create a modern audio visual interpretative Visitor Centre.

The total estimated cost is in the order of €3m.

5) **Main Building Contractors – Lot 1:**

The requirement is for a Main Building Contractor with particular experience in building conservation works.

The Main Contractor is identified as Lot 1 and represents approx. 45% of the cost of the project.

The works required are as follows:

- 1) The surfacing of the Ramp and Courtyard with granite sets and a resin bonded gravel with a total surface area of 896m² approx.
- 2) The demolition and removal of the out-buildings (store & toilet) measuring 20m² approx. beside the curtain wall on the eastern boundary of the Courtyard.
- 3) The demolition of the single storey lean-to at the eastern gable of the Barrack building measuring 13m² approx. and its replacement with a glazed balcony at 1st floor level, a Reception entrance and stairwell all measuring 25m² approx. Access opes at ground and first floor levels will also be provided to accommodate entry/egress to the Reception area and the balcony.
- 4) The removal of the modern staircases in the Barrack building and the removal of part of the first floor to create a double height-ceiling in the Reception area.
- 5) The demolition and removal of the modern single storey glazed link building in the south western corner of the Courtyard measuring 83m² approx. and its replacement with a new 2 storey glazed link building measuring 152m² approx. and a lift. The necessary opes will be created in the Armaments building south wall for access purposes.
- 6) The construction of a glazed link bridge between the armaments building and the Keep at first floor level and the provision of the necessary opes in both buildings.
- 7) The removal of the 1st floor of the Keep to create a double height space for the re-enactment of the Siege of Athlone. The dome will also be replaced and a mobility impaired access will be constructed.
- 8) Where internal decoration is required best practice conservation principles will apply.

The Main Contractor will liaise and cooperate with the other contractors on the site to insure that all aspects of the project progress in harmony and shall accommodate a phased/partial handover of his work area to enable the fit out of the buildings to commence on September 1st 2010.

The Main Contractor and his personnel will be the Project Supervisor Construction Stage under the Safety, Health & Welfare at Work legislation in respect of all aspects of the works required under their contract.

The minimum criterion for applicants is the successful delivery of projects and a minimum turnover of €2.5m per year over the past 3 years. Experience of conservation works on old buildings will be an advantage.

6) Main Fit-out Contractor – Lot 2:

This Contractor will be an Exhibition Fit-out Contractor for the development, construction and installation of an Interpretive Visitor Experience and Museum Exhibition.

The fit-out comprises of 700m² of interpretative displays in the existing Castle rooms as well as the new areas in the extended floor space. Timber framed showcases and display lighting hardware will also be specified within the fit-out scope of works.

The building works will be undertaken by the Main Building Contractor who will partially handover the buildings to enable the display fit-out to commence on September 1st 2010 and there will be a 3 month fit-out period.

The Fit-out Contractor will work under the base build until the building works are completed but will be Project Supervisor Construction Stage in respect of the Fit-out contract under the Safety, Health & Welfare at Work legislation and this will include the work of the Specialist Contractors who will be his subcontractors.

The Council will prepare approved lists of Specialist Contractors in respect of AV Hardware, Graphic Production, Manual Interactives and Mounts Production.

The Fit-out Contractor will select and identify a specialist from each list to be employed as a subcontractor and include the cost of their work in his tender price. Specialist contractors will not submit tenders directly to the Council.

The minimum criteria for applicants is the successful delivery of at least 2no. museum fit-out projects preferably within historical buildings as a Main Fit-out/Exhibition Contractor over the past 3 years with the cumulative contract value exceeding €1,050,000.00. Proven experience of working with a number of specialist museum subcontractors will be an advantage.

The Fit-out Contractor is identified as Lot 2 and represents 31-80% of the cost of the project inclusive of the specialist works.

7) Specialist Contractors:

Specialist Contractors to be used as sub-contractors by the Fit-out Contractor are as follows:

- (a) AV Hardware – Identified as Lot 3
- (b) Graphic Production – Identified as Lot 4
- (c) Manual Interactives – Identified as Lot 5
- (d) Mounts Production – Identified as Lot 6

Lot 3 represents approx. 4.53% of the contract, Lot 4 approx. 2.65%, Lot 5 approx. 2.65% and Lot 6 approx 2.27%

(a) AV Hardware – Lot 3:

The AV Hardware Specialist Contractor will provide for the systems engineering, supply, delivery, installation, commissioning and systems programming of the museum and exhibition audio visual I.T. and interactive hardware and control systems for the Visitor Centre.

The Minimum criteria for applicants is the successful delivery of similar work on at least 3no. museum/cultural exhibition projects over the past 3 years with each AV Hardware Contract value exceeding €90,000.00. Work within historical buildings will be an advantage.

(b) Graphic Production – Lot 4:

The Graphic Production/Fabrication Contractor will produce and commission, deliver and install a wide range of graphic panels, including but not limited to museum quality foamex graphics, cut-outs, external metal graphics, sign writing, decals, graphic table tops etc. for the Visitor Centre.

The work requires the production and installation of all graphic elements. Graphics will be integrated within the exhibition elements including showcases and set works.

The minimum criteria for applicants will be the successful delivery of graphic production on at least 3no. museum/cultural exhibition projects over the last 3 years with each contract value exceeding €70,000.00.

(c) Manual Interactives – Lot 5:

The Manual Interactives Contractor will provide for the construction detailing, prototyping, testing, full fabrication, delivery and installation of bespoke manual interactives for the Visitor Centre.

The minimum criteria for applicants is the successful delivery of similar services on at least 3no. museum/cultural exhibition projects over the past 3 years with each contract value exceeding €50,000.00.

(d) Mounts – Lot 6:

The Mounts Contractor will create mounts for all the artefacts to be displayed in the Visitor Centre and the works will comprise objects of varying weight and size. An on-site working area will be available to the successful contractor.

The work requires the survey of objects, design of mounts to provide full support for the objects, aesthetic consideration of the mounts to be as visually unobtrusive as possible whilst still supporting the object, fabrication and fitting of mounts and final installation.

The minimum criteria for applicants is the successful delivery of at least 3no. similar size commissions each with a value of €60,000.00 and experience of working with a variety of objects. Experience of working within Museum environments and the handling of museum artefacts is necessary.

General:

Specialist Contractors will not be required to submit a tender to the Council. Successful applicants will be placed on panels from which the Fit-out Contractor will select subcontractors to undertake the specialist work for them.

8) AV Software Contractors – Lot 7:

The AV Software Contractor will produce all the A.V. software exhibition elements for the Visitor Centre.

The role of the Contractor is to develop and realise the AV and audio briefs for the exhibition including planning, pre-production, production, post-production, installation, programming, testing, encoding/transfer, commissioning, installation and on-site sound balancing.

The minimum criteria for applicants will be successful delivery of similar services on at least 3no. museum/cultural exhibition projects over the past 3 years with each contract having a value of at least €120,000.00.

This contract is identified as Lot 7 and represents approximately 5.3% of the cost of the contract and the Contractor will be contracted directly by the Council.

9) Graphic Artwork- Lot 8:

The Graphic Artwork Contractor will detail and undertake the art working of all of the graphic elements for the exhibition including the development of a cohesive format for text panels and scenic graphics, preparation of all graphics for production including image only scenic graphics and integrated texts and image graphics. He will also liaise with the Exhibition Design Team and the Scriptwriter to complete the art working.

The minimum criteria for applicants will be the successful delivery of similar services on at least 3no. museum/cultural exhibition projects over the past 3 years with each having a value of at least €50,000.00.

This contract is identified as Lot 8 and represents approximately 2.25% of the cost of the contract and the contractor will be contracted directly by the Council.

10) Procurement – Direct Contracts:

The restricted procedure will be used to select the contractors for the direct contracts and direct contracts will be entered into by the Council with the following:

- (a) Main Building Contractor
- (b) Main Fit-out Contractor
- (c) AV Software Contractor
- (d) Graphics Artwork Contractor

Each of these contractors must complete and return the appropriate Prequalification Questionnaire attached hereto by the closing date of April 26th, 2010.

Eight (8no.) Main Building Contractors and six (6no.) of each of the other 3no. Direct Contractors, will be selected on the basis of the criteria set out in the Prequalification Questionnaire and these contractors will be invited to tender for their element of the project by May 14th 2010.

11) Procurement – Specialist Contractors:

Each Specialist Contractor must complete the Prequalification Questionnaire in respect of their specialist area of work, which should be returned to the Council not later than 4p.m. on April 26th 2010.

On the basis of the criteria in Prequalification Questionnaire, approved panels will be established for each specialist work area and the Fit-out Contractor

will select a Specialist Contractor from each of these panels, whom they will subcontract to undertake their specialist area of work and the Fit-out Contractor will include the cost of the specialist works in his tender at the invitation to tender stage. Tenders will not be required from Specialist Contractors but they must complete the Prequalification Questionnaire for selection on the panels.

12) Contract Award Criteria:

The contract award criteria will be the “most economically advantageous tender” and the factors to be taken into consideration in making the assessment as well as the methodology for applying the criteria and the quality/price ratio for weightings will be provided to Tenderers in the Tender Documents.

13) Procurement Process/Evaluation:

The Contractors will be procured by means of the “Restricted Procedure” under Directive 2004/18/ EC, S.I.329/06 [European Communities (Award of Public Authorities Contracts) Regulations], the Department of Finance circulars and guidelines, their Capital Works Management Framework, the conditions for participation and documentation issued by the Council and the detail of the e-tenders advertisement.

All interested applicants i.e. Direct Contractors and Specialist Contractor are invited to complete the Prequalification Questionnaire which is relevant to them and all questionnaires are attached hereto.

They should be fully completed in accordance with the instructions contained in the documents and all queries should be fully responded to as any omissions may lead to disqualification.

Submissions will be assessed and evaluated by means of a qualitative selection based on the conditions for participation as outlined in the e-tenders advertisement, the documentation issued by the Council and the responses in the questionnaires.

Eight (8no.) Main Building Contractors and 6no. of the other Direct Contractors will be selected to tender and Specialist Contractors who qualify will be placed on each of the Specialist panels.

14) Conditions of Contract/Engagement:

The contract will be in accordance with the Department of Finance form of Construction Contracts for Public Works for Minor Civil Engineering and Building Works designed by the employer.

15) Contract Details:

The contract should commence in Summer of 2010 and be completed by early December 2010.

16) Health & Safety:

The Direct Contractors and their personnel will be the Project Supervisor Construction Stage under the Safety, Health & Welfare at Work legislation in respect of all aspects of the project that they are contracted to undertake. The Fit-out Contractor will be PSCS for the work of the Specialist Contractors.

The work areas involving particular risk are

- Works in proximity to busy existing road and bridge over River Shannon
- Works to existing buildings including working at height
- Demolition of structures
- Works on protected structures
- Sharing site with other Contractors

17) Pricing Document:

A Pricing Document will form part of the tender documentation.

18) Submissions:

A separate and appropriate Prequalification Questionnaire in respect of Main/Direct Contractors who wish to be considered and Specialist Contractors who wish to be placed on the panels should be submitted to,

Town Clerk
Athlone Town Council
Civic Centre
Church Street
Athlone
Co. Westmeath

The closing date for the receipt of completed Questionnaires is April 26th 2010.