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NHS Supply Chain

Scan4Safety Framework Agreement

Customer Guide

Version 1.0 July 2026

NHS Supply Chain

Framework name	Scan4Safety - Supply of Inventory Management Systems and Point-of-Care Scanning System and Associated Hardware Devices
FTS reference number	2026/S 000-054146
Period of framework agreement	Four years fixed term
Start date	26 June 2026
End date	25 June 2030
Framework type	This is a direct framework
NHS Supply Chain Category	In Hospital Services
For further guidance	For additional support please contact: Scan4Safety.Framework@supplychain.nhs.uk

Maximum Call-Off Contract length	10 years from the Call-Off Contract start date
Scope of the agreement	Inventory management and point-of-care systems including combined systems and the supply of related devices and hardware. Further detail is set out in the Framework Catalogue within Schedule 8 of the Call-Off Document Pack
Ordering options	1. The Framework Agreement allows for “mini competitions” in Lots 1, 2, 3 or 4 so that orders can be placed following the reopening of competition. 2. The Framework Agreement also allows for “direct awards” in respect of Lot 4 only so that orders within Lot 4 can be placed in specified circumstances without reopening competition.
Pricing	Maximum Contract Prices for the goods and/or services are set out in the Framework Catalogue (within the Call-Off Document pack). Framework Agreement suppliers may only offer improved pricing as part of the mini competition ordering option.

Can be used by	The following entities are entitled to place orders through this Framework Agreement: • any NHS trust • any other NHS entity • any government department, agency or other statutory body (for the avoidance of doubt including local authorities); and/or • any private sector entity active in the UK healthcare sector. They are referred to as either the "Customer" or the "Buyer" depending on the document and these two terms should be considered interchangeable.
Contract notice	https://www.find-tender.service.gov.uk/Notice/054146-2026
Contact details	Scan4Safety.Framework@supplychain.nhs.uk

Buying from the Scan4Safety Framework Agreement

Introduction

This Customer Guide sets out step by step how you can order from the Framework Agreement using both mini competition and direct award options.

Statements of Requirements

For both mini competition and direct award ordering procedures, you will need to develop a statement setting out your requirements ("**Statement of Requirements**"). This Statement of Requirements will be a key document that is used as part of any call-off process. It will ultimately form part of the Order Form when you get to the point of placing an order.

Your Statement of Requirements should broadly define the relevant goods and/or services you require. It should contain sufficient detail so that your specific requirements will be clear to suppliers with reference to the Framework Catalogue and the goods and/or services they offer under it. It should also align with the Framework Agreement Specification found in Schedule 5 of the Call-Off Document Pack, included as part of the Order Form.

If the nature of your requirements is sensitive, you may require potential framework suppliers to enter into a non-disclosure agreement as a condition of participation in your call-off process. A template non-disclosure letter can be found in the Call-Off Document Pack (Schedule 1 – IMS Non-Disclosure Agreement).

Ordering Using the Mini Competition Option

This option is available for all Lots.

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In relation to Lot 4 only, you should make the choice of whether to follow a mini competition by applying of one or more of the following objective criteria:

- You require a further competition to improve the terms of the Contract in your favour including by application of any relevant Award Criteria and/or savings mechanism
- You have a bespoke requirement within the scope of the Framework Agreement; and/or
- You require further information to precisely formulate all the terms of the contract.

The associated stages and key steps required at each stage are set out below.

Stage	Key steps for each stage
1	Access the Framework Agreement Step 1: If this is your first time using the Framework Agreement, sign an access letter confirming NHS Supply Chain's approval to your proposed utilisation of the Framework Agreement
2	Engage with suppliers as appropriate Step 1: Define Statement of Requirements Step 2: Request an Expression of Interest Step 3: Consult further with suppliers if required
3	Follow the mini competition process Step 1: Issue Mini Competition Pack to relevant suppliers Step 2: Receive supplier proposals (i.e. call-off tenders) Step 3: Evaluation of supplier call-off tenders Step 4: Notification of award decision Step 5: Completion of Order

These stages and associated key steps are described in further detail below.

Stage 1 (Mini Competition): Accessing the Framework Agreement

Step 1: Sign an access letter confirming NHS Supply Chain's approval to use the Framework Agreement

This access letter will be sent to you by NHS Supply Chain confirming your access and the associated conditions that must be complied with in order to use the Framework Agreement. If you have already signed an access letter in connection with a previous call-off under this Framework Agreement you do not have to sign another one by repeating this step.

Stage 2 (Mini Competition): Engage with suppliers as appropriate

Step 1: Define Statement of Requirements

Before commencing the mini competition, customers must prepare a Statement of Requirements. This document should broadly define the relevant goods and/or services required and contain sufficient detail to ensure that the customer's specific requirements are clear to suppliers, with reference to the Framework Catalogue and the goods and/or services offered under it. The Statement of Requirements should also align with the Framework Agreement Specification found in Schedule 5 of the Call-Off Document Pack, included as part of the Order Form.

Step 2: Request an expression of interest against Statement of Requirements

You may request an Expression of Interest from framework suppliers in the relevant Lot ("**Expression of Interest**" or "**EoI**") to identify framework suppliers capable of meeting your requirements. For example, a request for Expressions of Interest may be broadcast to framework suppliers in the relevant framework Lot where a match with some aspects of your Statement of Requirements is not clearly ascertainable from a search of the Framework Catalogue. You should give framework suppliers a reasonable period of time to respond, taking into account the complexity and urgency of your requirements.

Step 3: Consult further with suppliers if required

If required, following step 1 and 2, you may consult further with the suppliers to gain more knowledge on their capabilities of meeting your Statement of Requirements.

Note: You are not obliged to consult with or invite to the mini competition any framework supplier who is subject to ongoing sanctions pursuant to Clause 17 of Schedule 2 of the Framework Agreement.

Stage 3 (Mini Competition): Follow the mini competition process

Step 1: Issue Mini Competition Pack to relevant suppliers

You should prepare your Mini Competition Pack using the template mini competition documents found in the Call-Off Document Pack (Schedule 2 – ITT Mini Competition Template)

Your completed Mini Competition Pack should be issued to all suppliers within the relevant Lot or Lots capable of meeting your requirements and, where applicable, who have expressed an interest in tendering following a broadcast request for Expressions of Interest.

The Mini Competition Pack will need further adaption for Combined Trust Procurements (see FAQ 15 below)

Step 2: Receive supplier proposals (i.e. call-off tenders)

You should fix a deadline for receipt of call-of tenders in response to your Mini Competition Pack (to be set out as part of the Mini Competition Pack). This should be sufficiently long to allow call-off tenders for your specific contract to be submitted, taking into account factors such as the complexity of the subject-matter of the contract, the time needed to complete and send in call-off tenders, and the urgency of your requirement. Call-off tenders must be submitted in writing, and their content should not be opened until the stipulated time limit for response has expired. Under this Framework Agreement, all call-off tenders shall remain open for acceptance for 90 calendar days (or such other period as specified in the relevant Mini Competition Pack).

Step 3: Evaluation of call-off tenders

The Award Criteria, weightings and evaluation methodology should have been made clear in advance as part of the Mini Competition Pack. When evaluating call-off tenders you should ensure that the evaluation is consistent with the approach, criteria and weightings set out in the Mini Competition Pack. You should award the contract to the framework supplier that has submitted the best tender based on the Award Criteria.

Step 4: Notification of award decision

Before making an award following a mini competition, you should publish a Contract Award Notice to Find a Tender Service detailing your intention to award a contract. It is strongly recommended that you observe an eight-working day voluntary standstill period, beginning on the date of publication of the Contract Award Notice. However, you may decide to dispense with the standstill period in exceptional circumstances, for example, following a public health emergency. However, you should carry out an appropriate risk assessment before deciding not to comply with the recommendation to follow a voluntary standstill period.

Step 5: Completion of order

You should have completed a draft Order Form as part of the Mini Competition Pack issued to suppliers (Call-Off Document Pack, Schedule 3 – Mini Competition Order Form). This draft should have been completed with all details known at the point of issuing the Mini Competition Pack and must include all information that is material for suppliers to review as part of preparing their call-off tender responses. Therefore, at the time of this Step 5 you should only require the incorporation of the relevant information that only becomes available at the award stage. For example, any details relating to the winning supplier and their call-off tender response.

Before signature, you should carry out a final detailed check of all parts of the Order Form (including all relevant appendices) to ensure everything has been properly completed and there is full alignment and consistency across all parts. Once you are ready to complete, you should sign a copy of the Order Form and then send it to the supplier for them to also sign and return. The Call-Off Contract will be finally formed when you acknowledge receipt of the signed copy of the Order Form from the supplier.

Ordering using the Direct Award option

This **option is only available for Lot 4** in circumstances where you can ensure the prices are comparable between those Framework Suppliers that can meet all requirements in your Statement of Requirements.

The inclusion of variations or supplemental requirements to the applicable call-off terms and conditions would undermine the basis of this comparison. Therefore, you should not incorporate variations or supplemental requirements under this ordering procedure. You should use the mini competition ordering procedure instead as referred to above.

Note: You should not make a direct award of a Contract to any Framework Supplier who is subject to ongoing sanctions pursuant to Clause 17 of Schedule 2 of the Framework Agreement.

If the above conditions / requirements cannot be met you should not use the Direct Award option.

If you decide to follow the option of making a direct award under Lot 4 after taking the above issues into account, the associated stages and key steps required are set out below.

Stage	Key steps for each stage
1	Access the Framework Agreement Step 1: If this is your first time using the Framework Agreement, sign an access letter confirming SCCL's approval to your proposed utilisation of the Framework Agreement
2	Engage with the Framework Catalogue and suppliers as appropriate Step 1: Define Statement of Requirements Step 2: Carry out a Capability Search and Assessment Step 3: As an addition or alternative to Step 1, request an Expression of Interest if required
3	Make your direct award Step 1: Notification of award decision Step 2: Completion of Order

Stage 1 (Direct Award): Accessing the Framework Agreement

Step 1: Sign an access letter confirming NHS Supply Chain's approval to use the Framework Agreement

This access letter will be sent to you by NHS Supply Chain's confirming your access and the associated conditions that must be complied in order to use the Framework Agreement. If you have already signed an access letter in connection with a previous call-off under this Framework Agreement you do not have to sign another one by repeating this step.

Stage 2 (Direct Award): Engage with the Framework Catalogue and suppliers as appropriate

Step 1: Define Statement of Requirements

Before commencing the Direct Award, customers must prepare a Statement of Requirements. This document should broadly define the relevant goods and/or services required and contain sufficient detail to ensure that the customer's specific requirements are clear to suppliers, with reference to the Framework Catalogue and the goods and/or services offered under it. The Statement of Requirements should also align with the Framework Agreement Specification found in Schedule 5 of the Call-Off Document Pack, included as part of the Order Form.

Step 2: Carry out a Capability Search and Assessment

In relation to a potential Direct Award in Lot 4, you should carry out a search in the Framework Catalogue and the List of Requirements Responses using the parameters of (i) price; and (ii) "Should/Could" offers set out within the List of Requirements Responses (Schedule 10 – List of Requirements Responses within the Call-Off Document Pack), together with key product and/or service features with a view to identifying those framework suppliers that are potentially capable of meeting the requirements set out in your Statement of Requirements.

Step 3: Request an expression of interest against Statement of Requirements, if required

If required, you may request an Expression of Interest, in addition to or as an alternative to the Capability Search and Assessment, to identify framework suppliers capable of meeting your requirements.

Stage 3 (Direct Award): Make your direct award

Step 1: Notification of award decision

Following the engagement referred to under the previous stage, you may directly award a contract to the framework supplier within Lot 4 with the best price capable of meeting all of your requirements set out in your Statement of Requirements. Before making a direct award, you should publish a Contract Award Notice to Find a Tender Service detailing your intention to award a contract. It is strongly recommended that you observe an eight-working day voluntary standstill period, beginning on the date of publication of the Contract Award Notice. However, you may decide to dispense with the standstill period in exceptional circumstances, for example, following a public health emergency. However, you should carry out an appropriate risk assessment before deciding to not to comply with the recommendation to follow a voluntary standstill period.

Step 2: Completion of order

To place an Order, you will need to complete the draft abridged Order Form using the template found in the Call-Off Document Pack (Schedule 4 – Abridged Order Form for Lot 4 Direct Awards)

Before signature, you should carry out a final detailed check of all parts of the Order Form (including all relevant appendices) to ensure everything has been properly completed and there is full alignment and consistency across all parts. Once you are ready to complete, you should sign a copy of the Order Form and then send it to the supplier for them to also sign and return. The Call-Off Contract will be finally formed when you acknowledge receipt of the signed copy of the Order Form from the supplier.

Frequently Asked Questions (“FAQs”)

Some FAQs giving further NHS Supply Chain guidance on various aspects of ordering under this Framework Agreement are set out below at Annex 1 – FAQs.

Annex 1 - Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Below are some FAQs with associated guidance provided by NHS Supply Chain in response:

1. Can we include new conditions of participation in the competition?

The conditions of participation were originally tested at framework level. New conditions of participation cannot therefore be introduced at call-off level. However, you may carry out due diligence to check that a potential supplier still satisfies the original conditions of participation (see FAQ 2 below).

2. Can we check that a potential supplier still meets the original conditions of participation/selection criteria that were tested at framework level?

Yes, you can. Paragraphs 7 and 8 of Part 3 of the template ITT Instructions forming part of the template mini competition documents allow you to conduct due diligence and credit checks in respect of a potential supplier.

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3. Must we: (a) send an assessment summary to suppliers, (b) publish a UK6 Contract Award Notice, and/or (c) hold a standstill period before signing the Order Form?

(a) There is no obligation to send an assessment summary in respect of a call off contract, however official government guidance recommends this as good practice and it can also be helpful in relation to commencing the limitation period for any procurement challenge.

(b) It is however mandatory to publish a UK6 Contract Award Notice ahead of signing the Order Form.

(c) Holding a voluntary standstill period upon publication of the UK6 Contract Award Notice is strongly recommended as good practice and legal risk mitigation. However, it is not a statutory requirement. If a standstill period is not being held, the ITT Instructions forming part of the template mini competition documents will need to be amended in accordance with the guidance at paragraph 6.2 of Part 3 of the template ITT Instructions.

4. Can we amend the evaluation criteria set out in the ITT Instructions?

The evaluation criteria are Technical (70%). Commercial (20%) and Social Value (10%) – it is not possible to amend these. However, you may sub-divide these into to sub-criteria with sub-weightings in the ITT Instructions.

5. Can we exclude a potential supplier that does not achieve a minimum threshold score?

Yes, this is possible. Please see paragraph 3.8 of Part 3 of the ITT Instructions forming part of the template mini competition documents for guidance on this point. If not used, this should be removed accordingly and marked “not used”.

6. Are there any savings mechanisms available under this Framework Agreement?

Yes, see Appendix 1 (Savings Mechanism) to Annex 2 (Commercial Schedule) of - the Framework Agreement Award Pack (set out in Schedule 6 of Call-off Documents Pack). This sets out a savings mechanism available for Combined Trust Procurements (see FAQ15) below.

7. What considerations should we take into account when deciding on the duration of a Call-Off Contract?

The Framework Agreement specifies a maximum term of ten years from the Call-Off Contract start date meaning that it is not possible to select a term longer than this. This does not necessarily mean that a ten-year term will be appropriate in every case, and you should ensure that the term selected is in broad alignment with other similar contracts in the market. This is particularly important for Call-Off Contracts whose term will continue beyond the expiry of the Framework Agreement.

8. Do the Customer Terms take precedence over the Supplier Terms to the extent of any conflict?

Yes, but this is only where there are actual conflicting provisions. If the Customer Terms are silent on a matter and the issue is addressed in the Supplier Terms, this is unlikely to result in a conflict. It just means that the applicable detail is found in the Supplier Terms as opposed to the Customer Terms.

9. Can we add special terms to an order?

Yes, Customer Supplementary Terms can be added to the Order Form at Appendix 1 of the ITT Mini Competition Template (see Call-Off Document Pack Schedule 3 – Mini Competition Order Form) when undertaking a mini competition. You will need to consider the scope of any such terms from a procurement law perspective taking into account the relevant provisions of the ordering procedure.

10. Can we amend the Customer Terms or Supplier Terms?

It is possible to include Customer Supplementary Terms (see FAQ 9 above) amending existing Customer Terms but again you will need to consider the scope of any such terms from a procurement law perspective taking into account the relevant provisions of the ordering procedure. It is not anticipated that Supplier Terms will be amended, but these can be evaluated as part of the mini competition process (see FAQ 11 below).

11. Can we evaluate Supplier Terms as part of the mini competition process?

Yes, although this is not mandatory. If choosing to do so, you should conduct a scored evaluation of the degree of risk transfer to you as the Awarding Authority by including (as a sub-criterion of the Technical Award Criteria for the mini competition) the relevant legal evaluation criteria in this regard.

12. How long (approximately) would a mini competition take to run?

In order to increase the likelihood of a successful mini competition process, it is important to allocate sufficient time ahead of launching the competition to conduct any preliminary market engagement, develop the award criteria and financial model, and finalise the draft mini competition documents. The time allowed for suppliers to submit tenders will depend on the complexity of the requirement, but we suggest allowing six weeks at least for this phase, including a clarification window. The time needed to evaluate tenders and draw up an evaluation report and prepare assessment summaries will vary depending on the complexity and the internal resources available, but we suggest a period of at least four weeks here. Overall we expect that an approximate minimum timeline would be 4-6 months, but this could easily increase depending on the number of tenders received, the complexity of the requirement, and the internal resources of available to conduct the evaluation and draft procurement documents.

13. When drawing up a Statement of Requirements what must criteria be based on?

The criteria must be based on supplier capability.

14. Can we incorporate the functional requirements set out in the MosCoW spreadsheet into the Non-Financial Evaluation for the mini competition process?

Yes, you can do this.

15. Can we carry out a Combined Trust Procurement using the mini competition process?

Yes, you can do this. However, the Mini Competition Pack would need to be adapted accordingly. For example, to include the responsibilities of any lead trust, the liability position as between the collaborating parties, the relevant discount mechanism (see FAQ 6 above) and associated details on the conduct of the combined evaluation.

16. Must we invite suppliers with moderate-high/high risk ratings for Economic and Financial Standing (EFS) assessment in the PSQ assessment to participate in further competitions?

The Procurement Specific Questionnaire completed by suppliers is not prescriptive but does indicate that suppliers with moderate-high/high EFS ratings may not be invited to participate in further competitions. This gives you the flexibility to carry out your own financial standing checks as part of the further competition process and as part of that you may take into consideration the EFS ratings obtained at PSQ stage where appropriate and decide whether to exclude from invitation any supplier with a moderate-high/high EFS rating.

Important Note:

Please be aware that any guidance provided by NHS Supply Chain (including in response to the above questions) is generic guidance only and so does not take account of any specific issues or circumstances that may apply to your organisation, your specific requirements or any particular call-off process you may be conducting under the Framework Agreement. You should therefore take professional advice if you have specific queries or concerns relating to your particular call-off. Any guidance / template provided by NHS Supply Chain is not a substitute for taking appropriate professional advice, which should always be obtained as necessary in relation to your particular call-off process.