

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS TN-577208/OJ S 54/2026

FOR THE TENDERPROCEDURE

CALL FOR A REQUEST TO PARTICIPATE IN A EUROPEAN TENDER FOR AN INNOVATION PARTNERSHIP

ISSUED BY THE MINISTRY OF INFRASTRUCTURE AND WATERMANAGEMENT

FOR THE PRE-DEPLOYMENT OF AUTONOMOUS ROAD TRANSPORT

(DUTCH REFERENCE NUMBER TN-577208 AND TED-ID OJ S 54/2026)

Preface

This document provides the answers to the questions received by the Ministry of Infrastructure and Water Management on its call for a request to participate in a European tender for an innovation partnership for the pre-deployment of autonomous road transport.

Based on the questions received the Ministry of Infrastructure and Water Management has structured this Questions and Answer document into four (4) sections.

Section 1 provides an explanation on several questions towards the capacity in which a candidate (options 1, 2 ad 3) can apply and also how often per allotment or theme.

Section 2 provides an explanation on several questions towards the available budget.

Section 3 provides the answers to the questions received (answers sometimes refer to the information provided in sections 1 or 2)

Please note: the document “Call for a Request to Participate” required Candidates to submit their questions in the English language.

Rule 2: Communication and language(s): the RTP and all further correspondence and communication regarding this tender process **in phases 1, 2, 3 and 4** shall be formulated in the English language only. During **phase 5 and thereafter** (bilateral meetings and exchanging documents) might take place in the Dutch and/or English language.

Not all interested Candidates have complied with rule 2. The Ministry of Infrastructure and Water Management decided to translate the questions submitted in the Dutch language by using the Systran machine translation. It is only fair that if and where the machine translation on these questions (and subsequent answers) turns out to be inaccurate, such effect is for the Candidate that did not adhere to Rule 2 that questions had to submitted in the English language only. It is clearly marked in this document which questions were translated by the Systran machine translation.

Section 4 provides more information on a meeting organized by the Ministry of Infrastructure and Water Management on March 30, 2026 with the purpose to inform public transport authorities (PTA’s) and local governments holding contracts for collective transport on this tender procedure.

Section 1

Several questions were submitted by interested candidates towards the capacity in which a candidate (options 1, 2 ad 3) can apply and also how often per allotment or theme. This Section 1 provides the answers thereto.

In phases 1, 2, 3 and 4

As a main contractor (option 1): only once for each allotment.

As a consortium (options 2 and 3): only once for each allotment.

As a subcontractor: subcontractors do not submit a Request to Participate. Subcontractors are allowed to be used in every allotment and in every proposition submitted by a main contractor or a consortium.

In phase 5 and onwards

As a main contractor (option 1): based on the number of ITT's made available: for each and every ITT such a main contractor is interested in.

As a consortium (options 2 and 3): based on the number of ITT's made available: for each and every ITT such a consortium is interested in.

As a subcontractor: subcontractors can act in in every proposition submitted by a main contractor or a consortium.

Please be aware that during the tender procedure the applicable rules to avoid collusion (RTP requirement 2) will apply!

Section 2

Several questions were submitted by interested candidates towards the financial compensation applicable or envisioned by IenW. The reaction thereto is: the current tender documents do not fix a percentage split, per-assignment budget, or exhaustive eligible-cost list at this stage.

The €20 million are the funds allocated to this tender out of a wider €35 million budget, and the precise co-financing deemed necessary will be decided during this tender procedure. IenW is also not obliged to allocate the full €20 million under this tender. The actual level of funding committed will depend on the outcome of the procedure, the quality and feasibility of the tenders received, and the extent to which co-financing is considered necessary and justified.

The wider program covers the costs to prepare the public authorities and it is anticipated that said budget will not be made available directly to candidates that are awarded an innovation assignment.

Section 3 Questions and Answers by interested Candidates

Question 1

Concerning paragraph 9, Allotment A, item 2), will buses and shuttles be considered under the same category or are these counted as two subcategories with their own points awarded?

Answer 1

Buses and shuttles will be considered under the same category. They are not treated as separate subcategories and therefore are not awarded separate points.

Questions 2

- 1) Candidate would like to submit the tender regarding allotment B, but we would like to know if possible we work together with [anonymized] from [anonymized being a Party to the GPA] to do the submission together.
- 2) Or this project only limited to one company or no foreign company allowed.
- 3) If we can , how we going to submit the document together.

Answers 2

- 1) Yes; foreign companies are not excluded as long as the Ultimate Parent Company (see Directive 2013/34/EU how to determine the status of such a UPC) is located in a country that is Party to the GPA and no exclusion grounds apply listed in the ESPD.
- 2) No, see the previous answer as well as the call for a request to participate document on this topics as well as Section 1 in this Q&A document.
- 3) See the call for a request to participate document on this topic explaining in more detail the requirements to submit a Request to Participate when working together with another legal entity.

Questions 3

We would like to kindly request clarification regarding the participation of subcontractors:

- 1) Is a subcontractor allowed to be involved in more than one (1) Request to Participate (RTP), including within the same allotment?
- 2) Are there any limitations or restrictions applicable specifically to subcontractors in this regard?

Answers 3

- 1) Yes.
- 2) No.

For the avoidance of doubt: please consult Section 1 in this Q&A document explaining in more detail the requirements to submit a Request to Participate when working together with another legal entity.

Questions 4

- 1) If a subcontractor is formally listed in our RTP as a subcontractor or consortium member, is it not allowed to be included in another RTP for the same lot — as a main contractor, consortium member or subcontractor?
- 2) If a subcontractor supplies goods or services to our consortium on a purely commercial basis — i.e. without being formally disclosed in the RTP — does the exclusivity restriction in section 4.2 also apply to them?

Answers 4

- 1) Please consult Section 1 in this Q&A document explaining in more detail the requirements to submit a Request for Participation when working together with another legal entity.
- 2) The question is not clear to IenW. There are no exclusivity restriction in section 4.2.

Question 5

We are currently in the early stages of the certification process and have registered our vehicle under the WAM legislation as the first step in the authorization process. Does an active notification or registration under the WAM, as part of an ongoing prototype approval process, count as sufficient evidence for Requirement A2?

Answer 5

No, such an application or registration is not sufficient to meet Requirement A2.

Questions 6

- 1) Does the Ministry of Infrastructure and Water Management intend to launch analogous innovation partnership instruments targeting autonomous operations in the rail and tram sectors in the Netherlands?
- 2) If so, could you kindly indicate the anticipated timeline or direct us to any relevant upcoming publications?

Answers 6

- 1) No; IenW does not anticipate such tenders for rail and tram at this time.
- 2) The question is therefore not relevant.

Question 7

In ranking criterion 2, regarding the number of vehicles, tenderers receive extra points if more than 2 vehicles are offered. This favors pilots with several smaller (and cheaper) types of vehicles, instead of fewer big (more expensive) vehicles. Is this intentional?

Answer 7

With regard to Ranking Criterion 2, the formula takes into account the highest number of vehicles offered within the allotment and the number of vehicles proposed by the tenderer. The underlying

rationale is that scale of deployment forms one of the elements for the first triage. Be aware of the fact that the numbers pledged during the first triage cannot be downgraded afterwards when submitting an initial or a final tender. This rule is to avoid optimism bias that can distort the first triage process in this tender.

Question 8

Is our observation correct that the difference between the total budget of 35M and the released 20M leaves room for the Ministry to add another 15M to the pilots? If so, under what conditions will the Ministry release this extra budget?

Answer 8

See the explanation in Section 2 above.

Questions 9

For Allotment A you have provided 3 thematic topics.

- 1) Do you also expect that pilots will be awarded/realized in all three different topics?
- 2) If so, how do you think this is guaranteed?
- 3) If not, can you indicate how you deal with a difference between the number of participants per topic in the ranking?

Answers 9

- 1) It is not predetermined that pilots will be implemented under each of the three thematic topics within Allotment A. The allocation across the topics will depend on the outcome of the subsequent phases 5 and 6 of this tender procedure.
- 2) Please refer to the previous answer.
- 3) At this stage of the tender procedure, tenderers are not ranked per thematic topic, but solely at the level of an Allotment.

Questions 10

- 1) What is your definition of an entity that participates in one or more consortiums?
- 2) Under what conditions can an entity participate in multiple consortiums?

Answers 10

- 1) It has to be a legal entity.
- 2) See the explanation in Section 1 above.

Question 11

During the assessment of the entries during the Request for Participation, an initial ranking of entries is created. To what extent is this first ranking also leading for the remainder of the tender process, given the priority in selection choices or budget to be allocated?

Answer 11

The initial ranking established during the triage on the Requests to Participate does not carry forward into the subsequent stages of the tender procedure. This preliminary ranking serves solely for the purpose of selecting the most suitable candidates to proceed to phase 5.

Question 12

The budget allocation of 20M refers to co-financing. Can you indicate what division you are considering regarding co-financing from the Ministry of I&W versus the financial contribution of the entries?

Answer 12

See the explanation in Section 2 above.

Questions 13

For the business case and the experience of the various pilots, it is crucial that the regulations and legislation make it possible to drive without a safety driver, so-called Level 4.

- 1) To what extent do you think it is realistic that the adjustment of the legislation and regulations has been achieved within the given period of 48 months?
- 2) If it is unexpectedly not possible to implement this adjustment, are there alternative options in scope?
- 3) If so, can you explain it in more detail?

Answers 13

- 1) During the pilots, a safety driver or supervisory function remains part of the legal and operational set-up. Depending on the applicable legal route and the specific use case, this may be organized in-vehicle or, where legally permissible, remotely. One of the purposes of the pilots is precisely to explore how supervision can be organized in a way that is safe, scalable and economically credible, including the extent to which one supervisor may oversee more than one vehicle. In parallel, IenW is working on legislative amendments aimed at creating a clearer basis for the future integration of automated vehicles into Dutch traffic. At present, however, no definitive assurance can be provided that such amendments will enter into force within the 48-month duration of the innovation assignments. Updates on legislative developments are provided through the regular parliamentary process, rather than through the pilot procedure itself. If such legislative change is not realized within the innovation assignment period, the pilots can still proceed within the scope of the currently available legal instruments.

- 2) Not at this time other than applying mitigating measures which are developed in phase 5 of this tender procedure.
- 3) See the previous answer.

Questions 14

With reference to paragraph 8 of the Call for a Request to Participate (TN-577208), suitability requirement 4 for Allotment B requires candidates to prove an ongoing and/or successful application for freight vehicle approval in the past 3 years permitted by a type approval authority for prototypes, new technologies or new concepts.

Could you please clarify:

- 1) Does this requirement also include applications submitted to type approval authorities outside the Netherlands and/or outside the EU?
- 2) Does "application for freight vehicle approval" also encompass formal applications for exemptions, special authorizations, or permits for on-road operation of autonomous freight vehicles filed with a national vehicle or road authority, or is it limited to type approval applications in the strict sense?

Answers 14

- 1) Yes it does.
- 2) Yes it does and it is not limited to type approval applications.

Questions 15

Confidentiality qualification (Rule 8).

- 1) Can lenW clarify which objective criteria it applies to assess whether a candidate has designated "too much" information as confidential under Rule 8?
- 2) Is there a specific threshold or percentage, or is this assessment entirely at the discretion of lenW?

Answers 15

- 1) The current call for a request to participate document does not provide a fixed threshold, percentage or a closed list of criteria for when a candidate has marked 'too much' information as confidential.
- 2) The assessment is left to lenW's judgement, informed by whether the confidentiality designation does indeed frustrate the tender process. lenW will provide for a first warning before terminating the participation of a candidate on the basis of rule 8 will be applied. Please be aware of article 6:2 of the Dutch Civil Code that applies to lenW as well as the Candidate (both entities have to act reasonable and fair towards each other).

Questions 16

Safeguarding confidential information during bilateral meetings.

- 1) Which technical and organizational measures does lenW apply to prevent confidential information of one candidate from being disclosed (whether inadvertently or otherwise) to other candidates, in particular during and after the bilateral meetings in phase 5?
- 2) Are formal information barriers (Chinese walls) in place?

Answers 16

- 1) All tender documents and information submitted by candidates are treated as strictly confidential and are handled with appropriate care throughout the procurement process. Access is limited to those officials who are involved in the assessment and administration of the tender or who need the information for the performance of their legal duties. These confidentiality obligations are protected by Dutch law, the civil service oath or pledge, internal integrity rules, and contractual employment obligations, which continue to apply after the end of employment. As a result, commercially sensitive and confidential information may not be disclosed or used for any purpose other than the proper conduct of this procurement procedure.
- 2) Not at this time as a consequence of the fact (see previous answer) there are sufficient guarantees within lenW to secure the confidentiality by candidates.

Question 17

Use of confidential input for ITT / FITT documents. What safeguards does lenW provide to ensure that confidential information designated as such by a candidate is not used as input for the ITT or FITT documents that will be shared with all candidates in phase 6?

Answer 17

lenW emphasizes that the purpose of the dialogue phase is to further understand the proposition/solutions proposed by candidates and to use these insights to shape an appropriate and effective request during the FITT phase. Confidential information provided by candidates will be treated with strict care. Any information identified as confidential will not be disclosed to other candidates, nor will it be used in a manner that could advantage or disadvantage other participants. lenW will not transfer or replicate specific elements of one proposal into another.

At the same time, lenW aims to structure the subsequent phase in such a way that, within available capacity, resources and intended public value, as many viable solutions as possible can flourish.

Questions 18

Rule 12 (copyright lenW) and candidate IP

- 1) How does Rule 12 (copyright vested in lenW) relate to intellectual property contributed by a candidate during bilateral meetings?

- 2) Can lenW confirm that all intellectual property rights of candidates remain vested with the respective candidate and are not transferred to lenW?

Answers 18

- 1) Rule 12 concerns copyright in information provided by lenW to candidate; it does not, in itself, transfer a candidate's intellectual property to lenW.
- 2) The current call for a request to participate document does not yet set out a complete regime for background IP and foreground IP. That will need to be addressed in the later contractual documentation (ITT/FITT and the innovation assignment contract). Based on previous experience lenW anticipates that the discussion(s) during phase 5 on IP are primarily on Foreground IP developed during the innovation assignment(s).

Question 19

Liability within a consortium

If a technology partner (e.g. ADS manufacturer or software supplier) participates as a member of a consortium under option 2 or 3, must the vehicle supplier also be jointly and severally liable for all contractual obligations, including operational obligations outside its core expertise?

Answer 19

Yes if it acts as a consortium member in option 2 or 3. Not if it acts as a subcontractor towards a consortium (option 2 or 3) or as a subcontractor in option 1. See section 1 above.

Questions 20

Technology partner as subcontractor.

- 1) Can a technology partner alternatively be included as a subcontractor under option 1 rather than as a consortium member?
- 2) If so, which suitability requirements must the technology partner independently demonstrate as a subcontractor?

Answers 20

- 1) Yes see section 1 above.
- 2) The main contractor (option 1) has the obligation to comply with the suitability requirements, not the subcontractor.

Questions 21

Allocation of suitability requirements within a consortium.

- 1) How does lenW assess suitability requirements—particularly those related to type approval and delivery guarantees—when these are fulfilled by different legal entities within a consortium?

- 2) May such requirements be jointly satisfied by different consortium members?

Answers 21

- 1) These are clearly stated in paragraph 8 of the call for a request to participate document.
- 2) Yes (for options 2 and 3).

Questions 22

Consequences of third party- refusal

- 1) Can lenW clarify the legal consequences if a candidate submits the required intent to drive on the public road within the prescribed timeframe, but the relevant road authority subsequently refuses approval?
- 2) Would such refusal be attributed to the candidate?

Answer 22

- 1) lenW aims to facilitate this tender procedure and the associated approval processes as effectively as possible, including through coordination with the relevant authorities and the allocation of appropriate resources to support a smooth pathway towards deployment. However, it should be noted that the award of an innovation assignment under this procedure does not constitute, nor imply, any guarantee that the required approvals for operation on public roads will be granted. Such approvals remain, depending on the applicable legal instrument, within the competence and discretion of the relevant authorities (e.g. road authorities, vehicle approval authorities). Where candidates are required to demonstrate intent to operate on public roads, this is intended to ensure feasibility and seriousness of the proposed use case. lenW will support this through an initial assessment (“pre-scan”) to build confidence in the viability of proposed operations.
- 2) Not unless it is clear that the candidate is at fault/breach of the innovation assignment (for instance not submitting the proper documentation in time).

Question 23

Timing of approval versus intent

Is it sufficient for the candidate to submit an “initial tender with the intent on driving on a public road” within two years after award, or must the actual approval of the road authority also have been obtained within that same two year- period?

Answer 23

Yes it is sufficient for the candidate to submit a Request to Participate (not an initial tender) with the intent on driving on a public road within two years. It will be a requirement to seek actual approval within two(2) years in the initial and final tender of such a candidate.

Questions 24

Accepted approval frameworks for “freight vehicle approval”

- 1) Could lenW clarify which specific approval framework(s) satisfy the requirement of “freight vehicle approval”?
- 2) In particular, does lenW accept CE marking- under the EU Machinery Directive (2006/42/EC), and as of 20 January 2027 the EU Machinery Regulation ((EU) 2023/1230), as equivalent where autonomous freight transport solutions are legally classified as machines rather than vehicles?

Answers 24

- 1) Annex 1 provides clarity to candidates on the legal options that are currently available and the legal developments that are being pursued in parallel.
- 2) In phase 5, lenW and the candidates will discuss which approval frameworks are appropriate to apply.

Question 25

Intended contractual regime

Can lenW indicate, at a high level, which contractual regime it is considering for the innovation assignments (e.g. UAV, UAV-GC, or a bespoke contractual model), so that candidates can adequately prepare for the bilateral discussions in phase 5?

Answer 25

Prior to the request to submit an initial tender there will be a tailor made contract available based on the bilateral meeting in phase 5. The draft thereto will be based on the propositions received prior to commencing the bilateral discussions in phase 5.

Questions 26

Background IP and foreground IP

- 1) How will intellectual property relating to technology that existed prior to the innovation assignment (background IP) and technology developed during the assignment (foreground IP) be treated in the contractual model?
- 2) Can lenW confirm that background IP of candidates and their technology partners will not be transferred?

Answers 26

Please refer to answers 18 and 25 on both questions.

Question 27

DESCA consortium agreement

Does the mandatory DESCAs consortium agreement model for options 2 and 3 contain sufficient provisions on IP protection between consortium members, or are candidates expected to supplement this agreement themselves?

Answer 27

Consortium member need to supplement this consortium agreement themselves prior to submitting this document as an attachment to the Request to Participate. The model itself allows for modifications afterwards. And should, therefore, not present an obstacle to submit a Request to Participate.

Question 28

Use of information from eliminated candidates

How does lenW mitigate the risk that information obtained from candidates who are eliminated in earlier phases (e.g. phase 3 or 4) influences subsequent phases of the procedure, given that such information is already known to lenW?

Answer 28

The wording “eliminated” candidates is not correct. If an exclusion grounds was applicable or a suitability requirement not met then such a candidate was rejected. But if the candidate did not pass the first triage it has been offered a bench position. The proposition papers lenW asks from selected candidates that are allowed to enter phase 5 should be usable for lenW.

Question 29

Meeting for public actors

Can lenW confirm that the meeting organized for public actors is purely informational in nature and that participation in this meeting does not provide any advantage over private candidates?

Answer 29

Details on this meeting that took place (and the relevant information) is listed in Section 4 of this document. The reason to organize said meeting is the simple fact that participation of these entities to make achieve the objectives of this tender is crucial. They are the entities that procure the to be developed solutions.

Question 30

Duration of innovation assignments

What is the intended duration of the innovation assignments, and which options for extension are being considered?

Answer 30

The overall timeline of the pilots is from 2026 through 2029. An extension of said duration is - at this time - not expected.

Questions 31

A general question on the potential termination of the project (or consortium).

- 1) What happens if in the course of the project at various stages one or more parties want to step out, for economical or operational reasons.
- 2) What happens if this happens between RTP and final submission?
- 3) What happens between the moment that the funding is granted and the project physically really starts.
- 4) What happens when the project is already running for some time and one or more parties want to step out?
- 5) As an example for our use case, if for whatever reason, the transport company involved needs to decide to close down the warehouse, this transport company involved will step out of this consortium. What happens then with the rest of the consortium?

Answers 31

It is not anticipated at this time that this project will be terminated by lenW. If so, no innovation assignments will be awarded and selected candidates that have commenced bilateral negotiations in phase 5 are entitled to the remuneration. The questions raised will therefore be answered (and limited to on the fact that there is an interruption within the consortium).

- 1) If a candidate (either option 1,2 or 3) decides to terminate its participation during the tender procedure prior to submitting a final tender it can do so. It will then forfeit its right for remuneration. If a candidate was awarded an innovation assignment then the (financial) consequences will be based on the agreed contractual model.
- 2) See the previous answer. lenW might then decide to invite a candidate on the first bench position.
- 3) If a candidate was awarded an innovation assignment then the (financial) consequences will be based on the agreed contractual model.
- 4) If a candidate was awarded an innovation assignment then the (financial) consequences will be based on the agreed contractual model.
- 5) Most likely there will be a contractual obligation for the candidate that was awarded an innovation assignment to find a suitable alternative and if and when not possible (time, conditions, otherwise) then the (financial) consequences will be based on the agreed contractual model.

Question 32

Page. 3: 'This tender procedure (which is a negotiation procedure) allows the procuring entity to remunerate certain costs (for instance the residual value of an autonomous vehicle) that the contractor is not able to recover based on the contract duration of the innovation assignment(s)'.

Does this mean that, during the pilot period, the carrier can be reimbursed for the additional costs compared to normal truck operations (such as safety driver expenses, purchase/lease costs of the autonomous vehicle, physical (site) modifications, etc.)?

Answer 32

These topics are to be discussed based on the proposition(s) received in phase 5 of this tender procedure.

Question 33

Page. 3: 'The overall ADS investment program amounts to €35 million, of which €20 million is allocated to this tender to co-finance the innovation assignments over the next four years. This co-funding may (partly) cover the costs of permit procedures, commissioning research to prepare public authorities (including simulations and targeted research trajectories), and other related expenses.'

- 1) What is the purpose of the remaining 15 million euros within the program?
- 2) The documentation refers to co financing and partial cost coverage. Could you specify more clearly what level of own contribution is expected (%) even though this will only be decided definitively later in the process?
- 3) Could you provide a more detailed overview of the types of costs that may be eligible for co financing?
- 4) The text suggests that co-funding can only be used for government related activities, such as costs for admission and research to prepare the government and related matters. However, we assume that the costs will also be (partially) covered for the R&D of the vehicles, the additional personnel costs for the safety driver, adjustments to the gate process, etc. Can you confirm this?
- 5) How will the 20 million euros be allocated across the four thematic areas?

Answers 33

Please refer to Section 2 in this document as a response to all five (5) questions.

Question 34

Page 6: 'The selected candidates are then invited to submit an initial (not binding) tender to IenW. This initial tender is subject to negotiation between the selected candidate and IenW. There are specific boundaries that apply on what is open for negotiation and not'.

Can insight be provided into the (types) of topics that are and are not open for negotiation?

Answer 34

As stated in the call for a request to participate document: “At the start of phase 5 an online workshop will be organized by lenW on the applicable rules of the negotiation process”. Based on the Dutch procurement law there are several limitations. For instance: no modifications to minimal requirements in the ITT, no modification on the MEAT model etc. It is for this reason that lenW will organize a workshop with selected Candidates.

Questions 35

Page 8: Planning of Phase 5: in-depth conversations to enhance scope.

- 1) Is there an awareness that this phase coincides with the summer holiday period, during which the availability of both lenW and the candidate may be limited, making it difficult to schedule actions and discussions?
- 2) Is there flexibility to adjust the timeline accordingly?

Answers 35

- 1) lenW is aware that Phase 5 coincides with the summer holiday period. The indicative timelines have been communicated in advance and lenW expects candidates to make reasonable efforts to adhere to them, as lenW will do likewise.
- 2) Yes, the planning of bilateral meetings will be approached with a degree of flexibility where necessary.

Question 36

Page 9: Option 1, ‘For the avoidance of doubt: any modification on subcontractors during the tender procedure that might have an impact on compliance with the suitability requirements is not allowed and any modification on subcontractors during the execution of the innovation assignment requires prior approval by lenW. This is at odds with the idea that during the pilot various steps will be taken in which the use case is expanded and/or becomes more complex, involving new parties (who are not yet known at the start). How can this be addressed?’

Answer 36

In the call for a request to participate document, changes to subcontractors during the tender procedure that may affect compliance with the suitability requirements is not allowed. However if while a) submitting an initial tender or b) a final tender or c) during execution of an innovation assignment modifications (all require prior approval by lenW) are deemed necessary it is impossible but up to lenW to agree upon.

Questions 37

Page 12. Nr 4 'prove included in the RTP that candidate has an on-going and/or successful application for freight vehicle approval in the past three (3) years permitted by a type approval authority for prototypes, new technologies or new concepts'.

- 1) Do the prototypes, technologies, and new concepts need to relate to autonomous transport, or may they also deviate from that (e.g., ADAS systems)?
- 2) If yes, then only candidates who have obtained a permit abroad can participate, because in the Netherlands no permit has yet been issued for operating an autonomous truck (cat. N) on public roads.

Answers 37

- 1) No, the prior approval experience does not need to relate exclusively to autonomous transport.
- 2) Based on the previous answer the statement is not relevant.

Question 38

Page 13. 'based on the RTP submitted, IenW can ascertain that the candidate has already "lined up" potential client(s). For instance a shipper, terminal operator or distribution center'. What is the definition of "lined up" (engaged? interested? contracted, etc.)?

Answer 38

The potential client(s) must at least have expressed a written intention to participate in the solution to be proposed by candidate.

Question 39

Page 13. 'actual driven with an autonomous freight vehicle in a commercial operation five (5) points; b. if driven on a public road with an autonomous freight vehicle five (5) points'. How does this ranking criterion relate to a fair level playing field and the stimulation of market entrance and growth needed to achieve the development of autonomous transport?

Answer 39

This concerns a ranking criterion that only applies in the event when more candidates apply than the maximum number permitted to participate in the next phase. IenW made this choice because it seeks the most promising candidates for rapid and large-scale implementation, and expect candidates with specific experience more likely to succeed.

Question 40

IenW is issuing a tender based on an innovative partnership. In the tender document, many requirements are imposed on the bidder as a partner on one side. However, the document does not

make clear what lenW, as the partner on the other side, brings into the partnership (other than potential financial support) and which learning questions are important from the lenW perspective. There is also no visibility on a long term vision regarding the development of legislation and regulations (beyond the testing and piloting phase), which is crucial for interested pilot participants in order to scale up and ultimately reach deployment. Please clarify this further.

Answer 40

During the pilots (2026 through 2029), lenW is working on legislative amendments to enable integration into Dutch traffic (beyond the testing and pilot phase). The timeline for this is not yet publicly available. It is our intention that successful innovations emerging from these pilots can, upon completion, be implemented and deployed within the Dutch traffic system. "In addition to co-funding, lenW brings coordination, convening power, policy alignment, an embedding with European Testbed, and support in structuring the learning agenda with implementing bodies and authorities."

Question 41

What are the co-funding rates for industry partners, and what types of activities are covered by them?

Answer 41

Please refer to Section 2 of this document.

Question 42

Does the figure of 20 million include co-financing?

Answer 42

Please refer to Section 2 of this document.

Question 43

What is or can be classified as co-financing?

Answer 43

Please refer to Section 2 of this document.

Question 44

What commitment are we making by submitting the RTP on 15 April, the proposition paper on 15 May, and the final submission on September 15th?

Answer 44

By submitting a Request to Participate, a candidate commits to the tender procedure as defined in the call for a request to participate document including the applicable rules therein. The date of September 15th is not correct, it should either be September 4 (submitting an initial not binding tender or September 25 (submitting a final and binding tender).

Question 45

The RTP form appears to be designed for submission by a single organisation; how should we complete it when applying as a consortium?

Answer 45

A 'candidate' is the legal entity that submits the Request to Participate. Either as a main contractor or as the legal representative of a (in)formal consortium.

Question 46

Can the monitoring and evaluation company also be part of a consortium?

Answer 46

Yes.

Question 47

How is the monitoring and evaluation carried out: as a process evaluation or as an ex ante/ex post evaluation?

Answer 47

To be discussed in phase 5 of this tender procedure in line with the anticipated scope(s) of the ITT's.

Question 48

Is the candidate an individual party or a consortium of parties?

Answer 48

Please read the call for a request to participate document as well as Section 1 of this document.

Question 49

What is the maximum number of candidates a pilot can carry?

Answer 49

The question is not clear to IenW and cannot be answered. It depends on the number of selected candidates, the propositions they suggest and the available resources needed (budget capacity otherwise).

Question 50

Who covers the admission fees?

Answer 50

The question is not clear. The admission costs to submit a Request to Participate is for the candidate that submits such Request to Participate.

Question 51

Can IenW provide clarification on the contractual terms, particularly in light of the prescribed Desca model?

Answer 51

See answer 25 towards the process how the contractual terms and conditions between IenW en Candidate are developed during phase 5. Desca only applies towards the contractual terms and conditions between the member of a consortium themselves.

Question 52

When will the pilot projects be deemed a success by I&W?

Answer 52

If the ambitions in this tender are realised:

- 1) enabling industry and operators of public transport to deploy and validate autonomous transport solutions in real operational settings in the Netherlands. As a European stepping stone in the pre-type-approval phase, with a credible pathway (see **annex 1**) towards scalable, fully operational and commercially viable services around 2030, and;
- 2) having generated structured real-world learning for public authorities and operators - on safety assurance, supervision, permitting, enforcement interfaces and system integration - so that autonomous driving can become a normal, day-to-day element of mobility and freight transport in the years ahead.

Question 53

Candidates shall use the FITT-document as the basis for their final (and binding) tender. Based on the Most Economically Advantageous Tender (MEAT) and evaluation methodology described in such a

FITT-document, lenW might award one or more innovation assignments. Could you explain why the term 'might' is used?

Answer 53

The word 'might' is used because lenW expressly reserves discretion both on whether to make an award at all and on how many innovation assignments to award. The exact number and scope of innovation assignments are currently unknown and may be further shaped during phases 5 and 6.

Questions 54

- 1) Is it confirmed that the partners admitted from phase 6 onwards cannot be changed for the four-year period?
- 2) If not, how will the selection process take place? On the basis of what criteria, and by whom, is this assessed?

Answers 54

- 1) No; the current documents does not state that a consortium composition becomes immutable for the entire four-year period. They do state that changes during the tender procedure are restricted, and that changes during execution require prior approval by lenW.
- 2) The selection is based on the Request to Participate which is submitted by a Candidate based on the criteria listen in the call for a request to participate document by a team of lenW.

Question 55

What TRL level is considered acceptable for a project to be eligible?

Answer 55

lenW does not apply TRL levels ourselves, as they focus too much on a single dimension, whereas the concern is the vehicle's place within the integrated system. What matters to lenW is that a vehicle can safely operate on public roads and will therefore possess a certain degree of maturity.

Question 56

What is the value of any admission already obtained outside the Netherlands?

Answer 56

The added value is two-fold:

- 1) proof that the suitability requirement 2 (Allotment A) or suitability requirement 4 (Allotment B) is met;
- 2) and if applicable also added value to ranking criterion 3 (Allotments A and B).

Question 57

Is insurance regarded as the participant's own responsibility, or as a collective asset?

Answer 57

Ultimately, ensuring that the autonomous vehicle is properly insured is the responsibility of a candidate. IenW is already making efforts at this time to address and discuss potential uncertainties with relevant actors.

Questions 58

- 1) How is the definition of 'autonomous' interpreted?
- 2) Must all sensors and intelligence be located within the vehicle, or is distributed intelligence and control from outside the vehicle also acceptable?

Answers 58

- 1) There is no fixed definition of autonomous at this time. With Automated Driving Systems (ADS) the vehicle performs the driving task independently for extended periods without active human intervention. These systems are commonly referred to as self-driving or autonomous driving.
- 2) Question 2 will be a topic to be discussed in phase 5.

Question 59

Should the parties also assess each other's individual performance?

Answer 59

The current tender documents do not impose a general requirement that candidate assess other candidates performance(s) or invest in a fixed set of joint project-specific activities. This topic might surface during phase 5.

Question 60

Are the parties expected to invest in joint (project-specific) activities?

Answer 60

See answer 59.

Question 61

Will the monitoring and evaluation of the pilot projects be put out to tender separately, or should the provider include this themselves?

Answer 61

Monitoring and evaluation will be a topic to be discussed in phase 5, based on the propositions received (within the specific innovation assignments envisioned and across all innovation assignments).

Question 62

Is validation part of the tender process?

Answer 62

Yes, in a broad sense. The aim is expressly intended to deploy and validate autonomous transport solutions in real operational settings and to generate structured learning. However, the precise validation methodology and evidence requirements will be further elaborated during phase 5 of the tender procedure (also based on the propositions received).

Question 63

What exactly is meant by 'transport between economic clusters'?

Answer 63

With 'transport between economic clusters' lenW means passenger transport from one or more 'pick-up-points' like a park & ride, public transport hub or rail way station to economic clusters such as business parks and industrial areas around airports, port areas and large employment sites. This theme is part of allotment A (public and collective transport).

Question 64

What do you consider to be cross-border activity?

Answer 64

Annex 1 recognizes cross-border testing and corridor development as relevant international workstreams, especially via Benelux and the European testbeds. 'Cross-border activity' is therefore best understood as operations or testing that involve actual border crossings and cross-border operational compatibility.

Questions 65

- 1) Can you confirm that, under option 2 as set out in UEA577208, page 9, the consortium is permitted to engage subcontractors, either collectively or individually, to carry out part of the work?
- 2) Does the lenW impose any requirements regarding the registration of a subcontractor for the pre-selection process?

Answers 65

For an answer to both questions please read Section 1 of this document.

Questions 66

- 1) What does the project organisation at I&W look like?
- 2) And which organizations and individuals are involved?

Answers 66

- 1) A project team will be in place based on the actual innovation assignments granted.
- 2) At this time, the procurement team consists of a project manager, a project secretary, a procurement lawyer, and various experts in ADS, public transport, and freight transport. This procurement team ensures coordination with the relevant policy departments and the legal affairs department of IenW. Coordination with organizations such as the RDW, CBR, Rijkswaterstaat, the Public Prosecution Service, the Police, and the Ministry of Justice and Security takes place via the National ADS Taskforce. For privacy reasons, the names of the individuals are not disclosed.

Question 67

For phase 5, it is stated that a grant of up to 10k is available.

- 1) Does this apply per consortium or per participating partner within the consortium?
- 2) Under what conditions?

Answer 67

This applies per selected Candidate (so either a main contractor or a consortium). For the avoidance of doubt: it does not apply to the individual consortium members and also not towards subcontractors of a main contractor or a subcontractor of a consortium.

The conditions thereto are listed in paragraph 11 of the call for a request to participate document.

Question 68

How are invoicing and payment arranged, and what are the terms and conditions regarding pre-financing?

Answer 68

These questions are premature. As described in the call for a request to participate document topics like these will be discussed in great detail during phase 5 of this tender procedure.

Question 69

How can we avoid an endless loop regarding risk-bearers (insurance) and authorization?

Answer 69

This puzzle will be discussed in-depth during phase 5 of this tender procedure.

Questions 70

A quick calculation shows that 20 million over four years for 25 parties works out at 200,000 per year per party.

- 1) How are the settlements and allocations made to the parties?
- 2) If it turns out that the budget does not balance, who is responsible for the resulting gap?

Answers 70

For the answers to both questions please read Section 2 of this document.

Question 71

If partners withdraw along the way, does this mean that additional funding becomes available for the remaining partners?

Answer 71

Please read Section 2 of this document.

Question 72

Who will be judging the bids?

Answer 72

Selected members of the procurement team (see answer 66).

Questions 73

- 1) Does I&W make use of (external) contracted support?
- 2) Is this contracted support subject to the same confidentiality and discretion?

Answers 73

- 1) Yes.
- 2) Yes.

Question 74

Is there already a governance framework in place, covering areas such as performance reviews, handling misconduct and resolving conflicts of interest?

Answer 74

Not as of yet but foreseen (a topic during phase 5 of the tender procedure).

Question 75

With reference to paragraph 9 of the Call for a Request to Participate (TN-577208), ranking criterion 1 for Allotment B awards points based on written statements from lined-up clients such as shippers, terminal operators or distribution centers. Could you please clarify whether a single client is permitted to provide a written statement of support to more than one candidate's RTP?

Answer 75

Yes a single client is allowed to do so.

Question 76 (Translated using Systran)

Request for postponement of the registration date

"We ask the contracting authority to extend the application date by at least one month.

The reason for this request is that the complexity of the information requested – with concrete commitments on number of vehicles and take-off – and the necessary coordination with partners takes more time than is available within the current planning. Can the contracting authority indicate whether an extension of the deadline is possible?

Answer 76

No, the request is denied. If a candidate still needs to organize itself then such candidate is considered not ready to participate.

Question 77 (Translated using Systran)

Adaptation minimum requirement 5 seats

'The minimum requirements shall require the vehicle to have a minimum of five seats. We ask the contracting authority to replace this requirement with a functional target definition, for example: 'the vehicle and the technology must be equipped for shared transport that is accessible to all'.

This adjustment is more in line with the objective of the tender and prevents the participation of robotaxi concepts, which are explicitly excluded by the Ministry. At the same time, a functional requirement makes participation possible for vehicles that do fit within the intended use case. Are you prepared to adopt this functional requirement instead of a fixed seating standard?'

Answer 77

Functional requirements are difficult to describe in such a way that they fit all foreseen societal applications. For this reason, the requirement of a minimum seating capacity of 5 was chosen intentionally. However, we have reasons to reconsider this **and have amended the minimum seating capacity to 4 excluding the driver**. The societal goals stated in the call for a request to participate document still remain the focus of the pilots.

Question 78 (Translated using Systran)

Explanation of limitation: OEM may only participate in one project per lot

'The tender documents include limitations on the number of tenders per lot, with the (potential) consequence that an OEM may only participate in one project per lot. We ask for an explanation of the background and purpose of this restriction. This requirement seems to limit the number of possible registrations, as only a limited number of AV manufacturers meet the technical requirements. This can reduce competition and diversity of solutions within the plot. Can the contracting authority explain why this restriction is deemed necessary and whether there is scope to extend this requirement?'

Answer 78

The assumption is incorrect. An OEM can act as a subcontractor to every candidate. If however an OEM decides to act as a main contractor or as a consortium member then its participation will be limited to once in each allotment. This to avoid collusion during the tender procedure.

Question 79 (Translated using Systran)

Realistic estimation of the number of vehicles in pre-selection

'At the pre-selection stage, it is asked to indicate already how many vehicles the tenderer can use at least when awarding the contract. As the contract content and the functional/operational requirements for the vehicles have not yet been defined, it is difficult for tenderers to make a realistic and proportionate assessment. Can the contracting authority explain how tenderers are to determine this number as long as the project requirements have not yet been worked out?'

Answer 79

Candidates are required to base their pledged number on what they can credibly and realistically deliver within two years after contract award. IenW will not assign specific projects, routes or use cases; it is the responsibility of the candidate to define these as part of their proposal, and to ensure that the pledged numbers correspond with what can be delivered in that context. The pledged numbers have an impact on the ranking process and are therefore binding for a candidate.

Question 80 (Translated using Systran)

Combination of application areas linked to learning objectives

"The tender documents distinguish three areas of application for autonomous driving in public transport: urban, rural and industrial. The tender aims to gain learning experiences in different contexts and to gain insight into the applicability of autonomous vehicles under different conditions. In this light, we would like to ask for clarification as to whether it is permissible to propose a combination of these areas of application within a single tender, so that the learning experiences gained can be used more broadly and integrally."

Answer 80

Allotment A is framed broadly enough to cover different public-transport solutions. A coherent combined proposition is not obviously excluded, yet the exact scope of each innovation assignment will be modeled later in the tender procedure.

Question 81

Is it possible for one party to take on an OEM/Service provider role in one tender, and act as an ADS provider in another tender?

Answer 81

Yes, across the two allotments (A and B) a party may in principle choose different roles/configurations, as the RTP allows at most two RTPs in total, one for each allotment, and expressly allows different configurations per allotment. Within the same allotment, the express restriction for option 1 main contractors and the general anti-collusion logic still applies. Please read Section 1 if and when such a party only acts as a subcontractor.

Question 82

Is it possible for one party to participate as an OEM/ADS applicant in one tender, and function as a supplier in another?

Answer 82

See answer 81.

Question 83

Is it possible to formalize the role and commitment of an OEM after April 15?

Answer 83

If the OEM is part of a consortium (option 2 or 3) or a main contractor then this is obviously not possible. If the OEM is an anticipated subcontractor then this might be allowed if it has no impact on the applicable suitability requirements listed below:

Allotment A: a written guarantee by Candidate included in the RTP that it can deliver (in terms of production or a delivery contract) the minimum of two (2) autonomous busses or shuttles within two (2) years (minimum seating capacity of **4 passengers** excluding the driver) after an innovation assignment is awarded. The written guarantee has to be signed by either the OEM or the reseller of these busses or shuttles and shall indicate the earliest moment in time when delivery is guaranteed so lenW can verify that this suitability requirement is met.

Allotment B:

a written guarantee that it can deliver (in terms of production or delivery contract) the minimum of least two (2) autonomous freight transport vehicles within two (2) years after an innovation assignment is awarded. The written guarantee has to be signed by either the OEM or the ADS manufacturer and shall indicate the earliest moment in time when delivery is guaranteed so lenW can verify that this suitability requirement is met.

Question 84

At this stage, is it permissible to submit a use case-driven consortium with a clearly identified, but not yet fully contractually committed OEM/ADS partner (e.g. based on a letter of intent)?

Answer 84

See answer 83.

Question 85

Or is it expected that OEM/ADS parties are already secured at the RTP stage through formal commitments (such as delivery guarantees and proven track record)?

Answer 85

Yes a delivery guarantee is expected, please also read answer 83.

Question 86

- 1) Is it allowed to submit a suggestion by 1 consortium for more than 1 thematic topic in allotment A?
- 2) As consortium, as a member of a consortium?

Answer 86

- 1) Candidates do not have to refer to a specific thematic topic in their Request to Participate in Allotment A.
- 2) Please read Section 1 in what capacity.

Question 87

Can we add a goal to point 2: how to set up correct contracts between PTA, PTO, industry, operators, governments?

Answer 87

The suggestion is rejected as this would require the development of a robust evaluation model while the foreseen propositions at this time might be very different on the added value towards these skills.

Question 88

ESPD-document: Is 1 ESPD document required for the consortium or is an ESPD required for each partner separate?

Answer 88

For each partner separate. Sub-contractors if used by a consortium member have to be included in the ESPD of such a consortium member.

Question 89

In paragraph 9 point 2: Would it be possible to change the scoring to overall passenger capacity instead of number of vehicles?

Answer 89

No, the ranking criteria will not be adjusted. A deliberate decision has been made to rank the Request to Participate in this phase on the basis of the number of vehicles offered compared to the highest number of vehicles offered.

Question 90

Paragraph 8 point 3. What is meant with "Experience"? What kind of experience is required?

Answer 90

The term "experience" within point 3 of the suitability requirements in Allotment A refers to demonstrable experience in the operation in either public transport, collective on-demand transport or charter bus service. It is the responsibility of the candidate to assess whether it possesses the required experience.

Question 91

Is it a must or an aim for the ministry to have vehicles driving on the public road without a driver/onboard safety operator?

Answer 91

It is the more than an aim; without achieving said aim lenW cannot reach the objectives of this tender procedure. Please also see answer 13.

Question 92

European tender: Are there any requirements on the location of the company or consortium: Dutch, EU, European or worldwide companies?

Answer 92

See answers 2.

Question 93

Is there an OIM check (ondernemer in moeilijkheden) required for all participants during one of the phases of the procurement?

Answer 93

It is anticipated that prior to awarding an innovation assignment lenW will require proof that a candidate has sufficient financial means to substantiate its own investment(s) pledged in the initial tender. If candidate cannot substantiate sufficient financial means in the initial tender, candidate will not be requested to submit a final tender.

Question 94

As clear as possible: What additional rule/regulation/check are required the next phases of the process?

Answer 94

The question is rather broad. All relevant topics (related to the propositions submitted to lenW) will be discussed in phase 5 of the tender procedure.

Question 95

What is the required maturity of the vehicles related to system/function/operational/homologation at the start and during the 4 years of the pilot?

Answer 95

No formal maturity threshold is stated in terms of technology, homologation stage or system maturity. The aim of this tender procedure does require a proposition that is mature enough to follow an incremental, risk-informed deployment path and to be operational on public roads for a substantial period within the pilot window. In practice, maturity will therefore be inferred from the

delivery guarantee, prior approval experience, prior operational experience and the credibility of the proposed scaling path.

Question 96

Does the candidate needs to pay for RDW costs, or are these paid by the ministry?

Answer 96

lenW cannot provide an answer at this time. It depends for instance on the individual propositions submitted by selected candidates. This topic will be addressed in phase 5 of this tender procedure.

Question 97

Is an additional proposal document accepted to clarify all details of our proposed pilot or should the RTP be limited to the items mentioned in the "MS Word format Request To Participate in allotment A of March 16 2026 TN-577208"?

Answer 97

Yes, the RTP should be limited to the items mentioned in "MS Word format Request To Participate in allotment A of March 16 2026 TN-577208". Selected candidates will be requested to submit a proposition paper thereafter (see planning in the call for a request to participate document).

Question 98

Is it allowed to submit a suggestion by one consortium for more than 1 thematic topic in allotment A?

Question 98

Yes, see answer 86 and Section 1.

Question 99

Is it allowed for an organisation to deliver vehicles to other more than one proposal?

Answer 99

Yes, as long as such an organization is a subcontractor (see Section 1).

Question 100

How should the Prove of experience with public transport, collective on demand transport or charter service be provided?

Answer 100

Candidate shall do so by providing the required reference details in its Request to Participate so lenW can verify that this suitability requirement is met (free format).

Question 101

In paragraph 9 point 1 sub b, c and d: What is the expected content of a "written statement" mentioned in the ranking criteria?

Answer 101

The written statement referred to in paragraph 9, point 1, sub b, c and d must confirm the intended involvement of the relevant organization(s) in relation to the candidate's Request to Participate. It is free format but it should be sufficient tangible for lenW to make a robust assessment of the written statement (not for instance an e-mail: yes we might be interested).

Question 102

In paragraph 9 point 1 sub a, a contract is requested. Why is this different than the "written statements" in sub b, c and d?

Answer 102

If this criterion can be met by a candidate than such candidate should be in the possession of a concession contract. A written statement thereto is sufficient. lenW is allowed to verify that there is indeed an existing contract.

Question 103

In paragraph 9 point 1 sub a: Are there any requirements for the "contract"?

Answer 103

It has to be duly signed and lenW has the right to audit the contract for verification purposes only.

Question 104

In paragraph 9 point 2: What guarantee is expected?

Answer 104

As described in "MS Word format Request To Participate in allotment A of March 16 2026 TN-577208" a written statement of the number of autonomous busses or shuttles pledged above the minimum 2 and includes an indication of the earliest moment in time when delivery of these additional autonomous busses or shuttles is guaranteed.

Question 105

In paragraph 9 point 2: Offering a very high number of vehicles have a big impact on the scoring, while this big number of vehicles will probably not be requested by the ministry. Would it be possible to change this criterium?

Answer 105

See answer 89.

Question 106

In paragraph 9 point 1: What is the definition of "deliver" in terms of ownership transfer of the vehicle?

Answer 106

In paragraph 9, point 1, the term "deliver" is linked to the actual availability of the vehicles within the innovation assignment (owned or leased makes no difference).

Questions 107

According to the procurement calendar, there are a number of concessions that must be retendered before 2030 (assuming the duration of the pilot is 4 years, as stated in the documents).

- 1) If a PTO is actively involved in a pilot in its current concession area, what are the consequences if the concession period expires during the duration of the pilot?
- 2) Does the Ministry have suggestions on how best to deal with this?

Answers 107

- 1) lenW acknowledges that concession periods may expire and new concessions may commence during the period of the innovation assignments. However, it is the responsibility of the candidates to determine an appropriate arrangement to address this situation (in its initial and final tender) within the framework of a to be awarded innovation assignment.
- 2) See the previous answer.

Question 108

“The RTP requests a fully completed and signed DESCA consortium agreement from all participating entities. We would like to seek clarification on what is exactly expected at this stage of the procedure. At this point, the project scope, division of roles, and budget allocation are not yet finalized. In innovation and procurement procedures, it is uncommon to conclude a fully detailed and binding consortium agreement before these elements have been defined.

Could you confirm whether, for this phase, a less far-reaching form of cooperation evidence would be acceptable—for example: (i-) signed letters of intent from all partners confirming their

participation and joint responsibility, supplemented by (ii) basic legal information per partner (such as a recent Chamber of Commerce extract)? This approach would align with proportionality and common practice, while still ensuring full transparency and certainty regarding the consortium composition.”

Answer 108

lenW understands that given the ample time available more flexibility is needed. At the same time, lenW will not award an innovation assignment with a consortium if such DESCA consortium agreement is not in place. To solve this issue, the call for a request to participate on this requirement is amended to:

The Request to Participate shall include a written and signed statement including signed letters of intent from all consortium partners confirming their participation and joint responsibility, supplemented by (ii) an ESPD from each consortium partner that a complete and tailor-made version of the standard DESCA consortium agreement which is available on: <https://www.desca-agreement.eu/desca-model-consortium-agreement/> will be included in every initial tender submitted.

Please note: any modification of the entities listed in said statement during the tender procedure that might have an impact on compliance with the suitability requirements is not allowed and any modification of said entities (or new participants) during the execution of the innovation assignment requires prior approval by lenW.

Question 109

Chapter 6 & 7, page 10: Given the complexity of this innovation partnership, the conditions regarding RTP-requirement 3 and the ESPD (as stated on page 10) are remarkably strict. Could you allow for a rectification period to correct minor formal or administrative errors in the submission?

Answer 109

lenW has to comply with the rather strict case law in the Netherlands and the limitations within the Dutch Procurement law. Corrections are allowed as long as they comply with the rather strict case law in the Netherlands and the limitations within the Dutch Procurement law. Please avoid mistakes because this can lead to unnecessary delays in the procurement process.

Question 110

Chapter 5, page 8: Today a lot of conversations happen and connections are made between ADS providers, Mobility Operators, PTA's, PTO's for use cases, volume of vehicles, contracting and way of collaboration. This Tender forces us to pour all those initiatives into one legal structure in 3 weeks, which a) is undoable from a governance perspective to have that signed off in 3 weeks, b) it already pushes into one direction/ use case, which might jeopardize other fruitful initiatives that we are currently investigating. We therefore request to postpone phase 2 (RTP) for a minimum of 2 months.

Answer 110

The request to postpone is rejected. Based on answer 108 more time has been made available to candidates to formalize their joint efforts.

Questions 111

Chapter 5 and 6, page 8: Regarding the requirements in paragraph 6 and the indicative planning in paragraph 5, the current procedure requires candidates to finalize legal consortium structures and specific use cases by April 15, 2026. This timeframe is insufficient for the complex internal governance and legal sign-offs required for multi-party agreements. Furthermore, forcing a premature commitment to a single consortium structure risks excluding more innovative and viable multi-party collaborations currently being explored. To ensure the highest quality of innovation assignments, would lenW consider a two-step selection process where:

- 1) Parties first qualify individually based on their technical suitability and expertise during Phase 2/3;
- 2) This provides insight into the roles of various partners in the ecosystem and its opportunities. Formal consortium structures, and finalized use cases are only required to be submitted during the bilateral meetings in Phase 4/5?

This adjustment would provide the necessary time for robust governance and allow for the development of more sophisticated, innovative solutions that better serve the tender's goals.

Answers 111

- 1) If lenW would honor the first option then the problem arises that too many interested (and for lenW interesting) candidates might end up on a bench position. So that is no option.
- 2) Based on answer 108 more time has been made available to candidates to formalize their joint efforts.

Question 112

Chapter 3, page 3: Will the responses from Phase 1 be made publicly available?

Answer 112

lenW assumes chapter 4, page 4. The answer is that this document will be made publicly available on TenderNed.

Question 113

Chapter 4, page 4: What is the exact definition of a "candidate"?

Answer 113

According to the European Procurement Directive 2014/24/EC (article 2 Definitions):

(12) 'candidate' means an economic operator that has sought an invitation or has been invited to take part in a restricted procedure, in a competitive procedure with negotiation, in a negotiated procedure without prior publication, in a competitive dialogue or in an innovation partnership;

and an economic operator is:

(10) 'economic operator' means any natural or legal person or public entity or group of such persons and/or entities, including any temporary association of undertakings which offers the execution of works and/or a work, the supply of products or the provision of services on the market;

Question 114

Chapter 4, page 4: Until what moment in the process can the composition of a consortium be changed?

Answer 114

See answer 54.

Question 115

Chapter 4, page 5: Will the content of the bilateral meetings be made public?

Answer 115

No they are confidential between I&W en the candidate that participates in a bilateral meeting.

Question 116

Chapter 4, page 5: Developments on AD are moving fast, but the I&W process could take many months. To what extent is the candidate allowed to already engage in processes to speed up the implementation of AD, during the tender process, without disqualifying himself for the tender?

Answer 116

The current RTP does not prohibit a candidate from pursuing autonomous-driving developments outside this tender process. Candidates may therefore continue their own preparatory activities, provided they comply with the tender rules on collusion, confidentiality and correctness of the information submitted. Such external activities do not, however, create any entitlement within the tender or to public support outside it.

Questions 117

Chapter 8, page 11: There are Contradictions in the document on who you consider to be Candidate ('suitability requirements'). Please clarify.

- 1) It seems like only PTO's can sign in to this tender, while on the other hand mobility providers, operators, ads providers are also part of the scope. Can you provide more clarity on this subject and the reasoning behind it.
- 2) There are currently several companies that operate 'public transport type of propositions, but not being a PTO themselves or under contract of one. There are so many more roles and capabilities of relevance in the value chain that depending on the use case it might be more relevant to have a non PTO as the main contractor. Can you expand your suitability requirements saying that any company that does not comply to 8.3 can still be a candidate if it is proven that it provides to have the right capabilities (within consortium or as an independent provider) to operate autonomous vehicles and also get the extra points.
- 3) You can sign in as a new entity, consortium or individual party. How does this relate to the suitability criteria in 8.3?. Who can and cannot sign in?

Answers 117

- 1) This assumption is incorrect. Non-PTO organizations can participate as long as the candidate that submits the Request to Participate meets the suitability requirements
- 2) Paragraph 8 sub 3 under c provides that option.
- 3) Based on the previous answer and in line with Section 1 the interested candidate can make its own assessment if it can submit a valid Request to Participate.

Question 118

Chapter 4, page 4: Can organizations submit a proposal with multiple consortia/ use cases? Since a lot of combinations between parties are now made in the market.

Answer 118

Yeas please read Section 1 of this document.

Question 119

Rule 17, page 16: How does the dice method work and will the results be made public?

Answer 119

IenW will apply an online dice method and invite the relevant candidates to that procedure. When it is used, the dicing process is witnessed and recorded online and the results are clear for the participating candidates.

Question 120

Chapter 11, page 17: What are the exact conditions/rules under this subjective "obvious lack of the requested expertise and experience" criterium? (1a)

Answer 120

It should be read alongside Rule 16, which requires selected candidates to send adequately qualified representatives to the bilateral meetings. So if, for instance, there is a meeting on the contractual model and no legal representative of candidate attends the meeting then there is an obvious lack of the requested expertise.

Question 121

General question: To what extent is participation in the tender a precondition for type approval capacity at RDW?

Answer 121

Type approval is not part of this tender procedure. Type approval is a separate process and participation in this tender does not create any dependency with, or entitlement in relation to, a type-approval trajectory. RDW remains responsible, within its statutory role, for handling applications submitted under the relevant legal frameworks. IenW cannot give assurances on priority treatment outside the applicable administrative processes. It is foreseeable, however, that the volume of applications generated by this innovation tender may affect the sequencing of other test-related applications. In principle, applications will be handled in accordance with RDW's regular order of processing and capacity planning.

Questions 122

General question: IenW states the ambition to generate real-world learning for public authorities to make autonomous driving a 'normal, day-to-day element' and to act as a stepping stone in the 'pre-type-approval phase'.

- 1) Given this context, to what extent does participation in an Innovation Assignment restrict or facilitate the Contractor's ability to concurrently develop and deploy parallel autonomous initiatives in the Netherlands?
- 2) Specifically, if a Contractor initiates autonomous projects outside the co-funded scope of this tender, will IenW and the relevant road authorities provide the same level of cooperation in terms of permitting and supervision as for the tender-related pilots?
- 3) If a candidate is not selected for an innovation assignment, will IenW still provide support, such as assistance with permitting through the RDW, for autonomous initiatives developed outside this tender? We want to understand if the transition to normal, day-to-day mobility by 2030 is exclusively reserved for tender participants or open to the broader market.

Answers 122

- 1) No it does not restrict any organization to initiate pilot projects in the Netherlands outside the scope of this tender.
- 2) All relevant authorities will act on the basis of their statutory responsibilities. However, the additional resources allocated to this tender process will not be available.
- 3) See the previous answer.

Question 123

Chapter 1: The project involves significant upfront investments. Could the Ministry clarify if the Innovation Partnership's funding structure allows for the full coverage of these initial mobilization and infrastructure costs, or is the financial compensation strictly limited to operational costs, depreciation, and residual values during the pilot phases?

Answer 123

Please read Section 2 on this topic.

Question 124

We kindly request the Contracting Authority (I&W) to consider extending the deadline for the submission of the Request to Participate for Allotment A "Autonomous Public and Collective Transport", currently set at 15 April 2026 (09:00 CET). This Innovation Partnership is explicitly designed to stimulate complex, multi-disciplinary collaboration between public transport operators, vehicle manufacturers, technology providers and autonomous mobility operators. Establishing such partnerships requires sufficient time for alignment on governance, system responsibilities, compliance, safety, and innovation objectives.

Given the pre-deployment and highly innovative nature of this partnership, the current timeframe of approximately four weeks between publication and submission significantly constrains the ability to form robust and -well considered- consortia.

An extension of the submission deadline to 15 May 2026 would, in our view:

- improve the quality and maturity of proposed partnerships.
- support effective and fair competition.
- be fully consistent with the objectives of innovation partnerships under Directive 2014/24/EU.

We therefore respectfully request the Contracting Authority to consider this extension in the interest of the procedure and its intended outcomes.

Answer 124

The request is denied. The tender procedure and planning was carefully drafted with enough bilateral meetings to achieve successful innovation assignments. The entry process (submitting a Request to Participate) does not require a lot of preparatory work by interested candidates.

Question 125

At the Request to Participate stage, is it permissible to submit an application with a provisional consortium composition, where certain partners are identified by role and competence profile rather than by final legal entity, provided that the consortium is fully defined prior to the invitation to submit an initial tender?

Answer 125

No but more flexibility has been provided for in answer 108.

Question 126

Can a public transport operator act as lead applicant and consortium leader for Allotment A, with vehicle manufacturers, autonomous technology providers and operational partners participating as consortium members or subcontractors?

Answer 126

Yes.

Question 127

Does the scope of Autonomous Public and Collective Transport under Allotment A include on demand or - demand responsive- OV-shuttles that are complementary to the existing public transport network and may gradually become more integrated over time (fishbone model)?

Answer 127

Yes.

Question 128

To what extent is integration with existing public transport systems expected or evaluated within the Innovation Partnership, and at which phase of the procedure will this integration be assessed? Such as ticketing, payment, network planning and operational control.

Answer 128

These are topics that will be discussed in phase 5 of this tender procedure.

Question 129

Is there an indicative expectation regarding the scale of pilot deployments (such as scaling up of the number of vehicles, operational areas or duration), or is this expected to be jointly defined and refined during the Innovation Partnership phases?

Answer 129

These are topics that will be discussed in phase 5 of this tender procedure.

Question 130

Ranking methodology allotment A: 1: It is stated that the points are cumulative, so if a candidate has a contract with a public or collective transport operator and a written statement from one of the Dutch Public Transport Authority and a written statement from a Dutch city the total points are 15?

Answer 130

That is correct.

Question 131

The DESCAs consortium agreement is tailored towards usage in combination with a grant agreement by the EU Horizon initiative. Can I&W supply a version that is tailored towards the expected grant authority and grant agreement for the pre-deployment of autonomous road transport?

Answer 131

No, it is the responsibility of the anticipated consortium members to make this model tailor-made towards their own consortium.

Question 132

We intend to participate in this call with [anonymized]. [anonymized] and deploy it as additional fine-grained public transport within neighborhoods. In this concept, a group of passengers is collected at a public transport hub and transported to their individual destinations within the neighborhood, while new passengers are simultaneously picked up to be brought back to the hub.

In this way, public transport becomes more accessible, as passengers no longer need to travel to a stop, and more cost-effective as lightly used routes can be phased out, without introducing the additional congestion typically associated with conventional robotaxi- or ride-sharing concepts operating beyond neighborhood borders.

To provide a shared public transport shuttle with a spatial experience comparable to regular public transport, and thereby also limit the number of stops to some extent, [anonymized] is configured with 4 seats (excluding the driver) instead of the standard 7 seats (including the driver).

The current wording of suitability requirement 8.1 requires us to provide a guarantee for a larger platform or different configuration that has yet to be developed in order to be eligible to participate, and prevents us from scoring any points under criterion 9.2. Since robotaxis are already excluded from this call, could the contracting authority reconsider adjusting the minimum number of seats to 4, or alternatively substantiate why the stated suitability requirement and selection criterion are proportional and not unnecessarily restrictive?

Answer 132

The number has been modified to 4 passengers next to the driver. See also answer 77.

Question 133

Given the investment needed for a mere pilot project, the provided financing will be insufficient to cover the investment costs. Are there any alternative finance sources foreseen that applicants could apply for?

Answer 133

The budget made available under this tender procedure reflects the total level of financial support lenW foresees within the scope of this innovation endeavor for the coming four years. As this concerns an innovation partnership, the objective is not to fully fund individual projects, but to support the development and realization of viable business cases and/or societal value propositions that can ultimately be sustained beyond this innovation endeavor.

Selected candidates remain free to explore and secure additional sources of financing, including for example European funding instruments or private investment. However, such additional funding should not be a precondition for participation in, or the successful execution of, an innovation assignment.

Question 134

On the eligibility criteria, can it be confirmed whether the requested experience with holding and operating PTO concessions needs to be from the Netherlands or can be from other European countries?

Answer 134

This experience can be in any country in the world (not limited to GPA member countries).

Questions 135

- 1) For Allotment A, which will be the relation between this innovation partnership and the existing public transport concession held by the PTO operator in that region?
- 2) Will the successful applicant need to conclude a partnership agreement with the PTO in that region?

Answers 135

- 1) As described in the ranking methodology, the candidate will receive points for a contract with a PTO or CTO.
- 2) Candidates have the freedom to determine for themselves whether to enter into an agreement with the PTO in the relevant regio, and to determine the form of such an agreement.

Questions 136

- 1) Can lenW please clarify what happens at the end of the tender period?
- 2) Will there be possibilities for the innovation partnership to grow into a commercial operation?

Answers 136

- 1) lenW assumes the question is “at the end of an innovation assignment”. The answer thereto is that the contract with lenW ends automatically.
- 2) That is the whole intention of this innovation partnership. If this succeeds depends on many factors amongst which the success of the innovation assignment itself and procurement activities by the relevant actors at that time.

Questions 137

We are the PTA for the [anonymized] bus concessions in our province and can express our support for bids by means of a statement. The questions:

- 1) What should this statement look like?
- 2) What requirements must such a statement meet?

Answers 137

On both questions: any PTA is free to choose a format (look and feel) for the written statement as well as the medium to publish as they deem fit.

Questions 138

- 1) Which concrete steps has lenW taken to ensure timely market notification?
- 2) Given the current closing date, how does lenW maintain that all potentially eligible candidates have had a realistic and equal opportunity to submit a compliant Request To Participate?

Answers 138

- 1) lenW has deliberately undertaken activities to create a level playing field and to enable the market to participate in this procedure. lenW conducted market consultation meetings to understand developments in the market (Annex 3 to the call for a request to participate document), widely distributed the public publication on TenderNed and the Tender European Daily within its network and asked these extended networks to share the invitation more broadly. In addition, it has previously communicated through (newspaper) articles that lenW is launching pilots in the public transport and the logistics sector.
- 2) The current closing date complies with the minimum requirements thereto in the Dutch Procurement Law which should be sufficient based on the previous answer.

Question 139

The current timeline is inadequate given the technical and legal complexity of this program. Will lenW extend the submission deadline, and if not, on what grounds does lenW consider the current timeframe sufficient?

Answer 139

See answer 138.

Questions 140

- 1) Which documents are mandatory for a compliant RTP, and which signatures are required per document?
- 2) Given the current closing date, how does lenW expect consortium candidates to realistically obtain all required signatures in time?

Answers 140

- 1) The tender documents are very clear on what is required. Please study them carefully.
- 2) See answer 124.

Question 141

Why is the period between the request to participate (Phase 2) and the final submission (Phase 3) so short, given the technical and legal complexity involved in preparing a substantive bid?

Answer 141

See answer 138. The deadline for the first initial tender is phase 6 not phase 3.

Question 142

How many bilateral conversations does lenW foresee per candidate in Phase 5, and are records or transcripts made available to all candidates or treated as strictly confidential?

Answer 142

The planning shows three rounds of bilateral meetings in phase 5. Meetings are recorded and the recordings are provided only to the relevant candidate. They are therefore not shared generally with all candidates, and the confidentiality framework remains applicable.

Question 143

What can be negotiated during Phase 6, and can lenW provide a concrete example?

Answer 143

See answer 34.

Question 144

Rule 9 appears absent from the document — the numbering jumps from Rule 8 to Rule 10. Has content been omitted in error?

Answer 144

Only a type error. This error has been corrected (changed the number).

Question 145

Rule 7 states candidates will be excluded if they deploy fewer vehicles than pledged in Phase 5. How, when, and by whom will this be verified, and what margin of deviation is considered acceptable?

Answer 145

First of all: there is an error in rule 7. It should have stated phase 6 when the initial tenders have to be submitted. This error has been corrected (changed the number). Secondly: if an initial tender in phase 6 is submitted and the number of pledged vehicles is lower than listed in the Request to Participate, such a candidate might have outranked other eligible candidates. The sanction in rule 7 is to avoid overoptimism when submitting a Request to Participate.

Question 146

What are the central learning questions within this innovation partnership, and how will progress against them be measured?

Answer 146

The learning needs of IenW and the implementing agencies is about:

- Social and societal integration into Dutch traffic
- Infrastructure-related and traffic engineering
- Required amendments to national legislation and regulations
- Organizational aspects

IenW has an extensive set of learning questions. During the bilateral discussions with selected candidates, it will be discussed which learning questions align with a given proposition and can be addressed.

Question 147

In what way can regional pilots contribute to the program's learning objectives — for example in the areas of safety, supervision, permitting, and integration into the mobility system — and how will lenW weigh this contribution in its assessment?

Answer 147

Substantive questions about the context, scope, and similar matters such as learning objectives will be addressed in phase 5 with selected candidates.

Question 148

The preface states the program is not intended as an open-ended experimentation environment for early-stage research. What minimum TRL does lenW require at the start of the innovation assignment, and how will this be assessed?

Answer 148

See answer 55.

Question 149

Are innovation assignments expected to focus on a single specific application, or can a pilot combine multiple use cases within one area?

Answer 149

Both are possible.

Question 150

Is it possible for multiple pilots to take place within a single consortium, for example at different locations or with different vehicle types?

Answer 150

Yes.

Question 151

Is there a maximum number of pilots that can be supported within the program?

Answer 151

No. However, together with selected candidates we will explore to what extent the ambition can be achieved within the available time, capacity at the competent authorities and budget.

Question 152

Does lenW see value in pilots where multiple employers or logistics parties at a single location jointly act as the procuring party for autonomous mobility services?

Answer 152

The candidates are free to decide whether to propose an innovation assignment in which one or multiple employers or logistics parties act as their client(s).

Question 153

To what extent does lenW consider it advantageous if a consortium already has a concrete area identified for implementation and scaling, and how is this weighted in the assessment?

Answer 153

In this phase of the tender procedure only the exclusion grounds, suitability requirements and the ranking criteria as mentioned in the call for a request to participate document are used to assess the candidates.

Question 154

Are pilots that can become operational relatively quickly — for example in areas with existing infrastructure and committed partners — considered more competitive within the innovation partnership?

Answer 154

See the previous answer (153).

Question 155

The total program budget is €35M, of which €20M is allocated to this tender. How is the remaining €15M allocated, and can any portion become available to candidates under this tender?

Answer 155

See Section 2 of this document.

Question 156

What is the indicative financial contribution per individual innovation assignment, and what are the maximum budget allocations within the total €20M envelope.

Answer 156

See Section 2 of this document.

Question 157

What costs are and are not eligible for subsidy within this program, and where is this defined unambiguously in the tender documentation?

Answer 157

Only as an indication: the co-funding might (partially) cover the costs of permit procedures, commissioning research to prepare public authorities (including simulations and targeted research trajectories), and other related expenses. It will be decided during this tender procedure which co-financing is necessary based on viable final tenders submitted to IenW.

Question 158

What are the co-financing requirements for candidates — is a minimum percentage of public and/or private co-financing required, and how is this calculated and evidenced?

Answer 158

See Section 2 of this document.

Question 159

To what extent does IenW expect consortia to develop a business model capable of operating independently after the innovation assignment concludes, and is this a selection criterion?

Answer 159

IenW expects initial tenders (in phase 6) that are viable towards future delivery. It is not a selection criterion in this phase of the tender procedure.

Question 160

Is participation in type-approval testing (homologation) an explicit requirement or merely an option within the innovation assignment?

Answer 160

See answer 121.

Question 161

Is it possible to submit a proposal that starts with a safety driver on board and explicitly plans to transition to driverless operation mid-program? If so, does this transition require a new permit or an amendment to the existing permit?

Answer 161

Yes, it is possible to start with a safety driver on board and move towards a safety driver outside of the vehicle. The transition requires a permit according to the Dutch "Experimenteerwet" (see Annex 1). In case you mean driverless, see question 164.

Questions 162

- 1) Under Option 5 (Experimenteerwet), what is the indicative processing time for a permit under Article 149aa?
- 2) By what date must candidates have initiated this application to ensure driverless operation is feasible within the 2026–2029 window?

Answers 162

- 1) According to Article 5 "Regeling vergunningverlening experimenten zelfrijdende auto":
 1. Our Minister shall decide on the application within the maximum of six months pending on the maturity of the application.
 2. In consultation with the applicant, or at the applicant's request, a deviation from paragraph 1 may be made.
- 2) The timing of when a candidate is required to submit an application depends on the proposal and the proposed development pathway.

Question 163

Will lenW provide guidance or active coordination with RDW during the permitting trajectory, or is this entirely the candidate's own responsibility?

Answer 163

Yes, lenW provide guidance or active coordination with RDW during the permitting trajectory.

Question 164

What evidence does RDW require to issue a positive safety assessment for driverless operation, and is there a published assessment framework candidates can rely on when preparing their proposals?

Answer 164

The current legal options do not make fully driverless operation possible, a safety driver needs to be present in or outside of the vehicle. A framework setting out the requirements for the safety driver can be obtained from the RDW in due course. lenW will be investigating together with RDW if such a positive safety assessment for driverless operation will become available so it can be discussed during the bilateral meetings in phase 5 of this tender procedure.

Question 165

Will lenW share examples of previously granted Experimenteerwet permits or their conditions to help candidates calibrate their proposals?

Answer 165

lenW cannot share permits. The conditions can be found in Article 149aa Wegenverkeerswet 1994 or the Regeling vergunningverlening experimenten zelfrijdende auto. Guidance throughout this process is part of the program and lenWs contribution.

Question 166

The document acknowledges that legal frictions around remote supervision have not yet been resolved. How should candidates account for this uncertainty in their proposals, and who bears the risk if this remains unresolved during execution?

Answer 166

The friction around remote supervision is mentioned in Annex 1 under cross border. This information is presented to show that the Ministry is already working with the Benelux on reducing or eliminating such frictions and to facilitate cross-border testing. Questions about the context, scope, and similar matters such as risks will be addressed in phase 5 with selected candidates.

Question 167

Who bears the risk if the foreseen 2027 legislative amendment is delayed, and what contingency arrangements does lenW have to ensure operational continuity for candidates already active under existing instruments?

Answer 167

The candidate should limit its initial tender to the existing legal options as described in Annex 1 if it wants to avoid risks as a consequence of delays in legislative amendments.

Question 168

Is a public entity — municipality, province, or Public Transport Authority — permitted as the sole contracting legal entity under Option 1?

Answer 168

Yes if they can qualify as a “candidate” (see answer 113).

Question 169

How can local governments register for this tender if they do not yet have a contract with an OEM or AV supplier?

Answer 169

See previous answer 168.

Question 170

Can a collaboration between the multiple parties required for autonomous vehicle deployment be structured as an innovation partnership within this tender?

Answer 170

Yes if they comply with the requirements thereto in the tender documents.

Questions 171

- 1) Is a single technology supplier permitted to participate in multiple competing consortia simultaneously?
- 2) If so, what safeguards does lenW apply to prevent conflicts of interest or information exchange between those consortia?

Answers 171

- 1) Only as a subcontractor. See Section 1.
- 2) See section 1 as well and the applicable rules to avoid collusion.

Question 172

May a public authority submit bids with multiple potential partners or suppliers simultaneously, and if so, how does lenW prevent distortion of competition between those bids?

Answer 172

See answer 168 and Section 1 in this document.

Question 173

How does lenW prevent competition between public authorities seeking to approach the same suppliers?

Answer 173

It is not up to lenW to coordinate the interactions between public authorities and suppliers in this respect. Public authorities have to act according to many laws including but not limited to the applicable competition and procurement regulations.

Question 174

Are any suppliers excluded from participation in advance, and if so, on what grounds?

Answer 174

If an exclusion ground is applicable to such a supplier (listed in the ESPD-document).

Question 175

Does lenW impose requirements on suppliers regarding country of origin, and if not, how does lenW address supply chain risk?

Answer 175

In addition to the limitations that are vested in the GPA-agreement (see answer 2) there are several other limitations that might apply. For instance, but not limited to, the sanction lists of the European Union, the sanction lists of the United Nations. The Dutch sanction list on terrorism.

Question 176

What criteria does lenW apply when assessing requests for prior approval of changes to consortium composition during execution?

Answer 176

To be discussed during phase 5 of this tender procedure.

Question 177

One of the two main objectives of this tender is to establish a scalable, fully operational and commercially viable service by around 2030 (page 3). Will it be allowed to submit a bid (in phase 5 and 6) for a pilot with multiple routes and/or operational design domains (ODD's)?

Answer 177

Yes in phase 6 only.

Questions 178

- 1) One of the two main objectives of this tender is to establish a scalable, fully operational and commercially viable service by around 2030 (page 3). To what extent will it be possible to incorporate new insights during Phases 5 and 6 of the tender process and/or after the contract has been awarded in Phase 6 (additional partnerships, other and/or new routes not provided for in the awarded project plan, collaboration with parties who, unexpectedly, are no longer permitted to participate, other business models)?
- 2) And, above all, how does this desired flexibility relate to the requirements set for partners in the RTP?

Answers 178

- 1) Once an innovation assignment is awarded (after phase 6 was concluded) it will be possible, depending on the agreed contractual terms and conditions, to modify the contract.
- 2) The second question is not clear to lenW and should be addressed during phase 5 of this tender procedure.

Question 179

Chapter 7, 'Applicable mandatory and discretionary exclusion grounds', and other sections leave room for interpretation regarding grounds for excluding parties. Could the Ministry clarify which parties may appear in an RTP only once and which parties may appear in multiple RTPs (OEM, operator, PTA)?

Answer 179

Please study this document and all other tender documents carefully as they present sufficient answers to this question.

Question 180

Can the Ministry indicate how point 4 in the document 'REQUEST TO PARTICIPATE IN ALLOTMENT A AUTONOMOUS PUBLIC AND COLLECTIVE TRANSPORT' needs to be filled in?

Answer 180

To the extent point 4 relates to the written statements referred to in the ranking methodology for Allotment A, candidates may use their own format. The RTP does not prescribe a mandatory template for such statements. However, the statement should be sufficiently clear for lenW to verify that the relevant organisation genuinely supports or intends to be involved in the candidate's proposed innovation assignment. At a minimum, the statement should identify the issuing organisation, the candidate to which it relates, the intended form of involvement or support, and be signed by a person authorised to represent that organisation for this purpose.

Question 181

Are the three required written statements unrestricted as to form? Are there any requirements regarding their content?

Answer 181

Yes. IenW does not prescribe a fixed form for these written statements. That said, they are not unrestricted in substance: they must contain enough information to allow IenW to verify that the relevant party is in fact prepared to support or participate in the proposed pilot. In line with the ranking methodology, the statement should therefore clearly indicate which organisation is issuing it, to which candidate and proposed proposition it relates, and the intended nature of its involvement or support.

Question 182

May a PTA submit only one written statement for the administrative boundaries linked to the PTA, or need a PTA submit a statement for each concession area?

Answer 182

IenW does not impose any conditions in this regard. The purpose of this ranking criteria is to establish whether the candidate has support from a PTA, to ascertain that the candidate is already 'lined up'. The written statement may concern a concession area or apply to (an area within) the administrative boundaries.

Question 183

What commitment is needed from the Dutch city or local authority, at what level is a signature needed/sufficient (regarding the recent local elections)?

Answer 183

At a managers level in this phase, not an alderman. Of course a relevant and not any manager (for instance a facility manager would be too intangible). See also answers 180 and 181.

Question 184

The Ministry provided three options to submit (pages 9 and 10 of the Call for a Request to participate). In case of option 1, a single legal entity, is it permitted and sufficient that the requested proof (section 8 of the Call for a Request and section 3 of REQUEST TO PARTICIPATE IN ALLOTMENT A AUTONOMOUS PUBLIC AND COLLECTIVE TRANSPORT) is provided by (one of) the shareholders and/or (existing) subcontractors of the legal entity?

Answer 184

The person listed at the Chamber of Commerce that is entitled to represent the main contractor. Subcontractor's signatures are not needed in option 1.

Question 185

Concerning paragraph 9, Allotment A, item 2), will buses and shuttles be considered under the same category or are these counted as two subcategories with their own points awarded?

Answer 185

Buses and shuttles will be considered under the same category. They are not treated as separate subcategories and therefore do not receive separate points.

Section 4

There has been an information organized by the Ministry of Infrastructure and Water Management on March 30, 2026 with the purpose to inform public transport authorities (PTA's) and local governments holding contracts for collective transport on this tender procedure.

This meeting was recorded. Every interested Candidate can submit a request to gain access to this online meeting by sending an e-mail to: postbuspilotsautonoom@minienw.nl. Such a Candidate will receive a link and a password to gain access.

Please be aware of the fact that said meeting was in the Dutch language and usage of this recording is only to secure a level playing field (no right to make it publicly available). The questions raised during this meeting (all in Dutch) have also been machine translated and will be made available to interested candidates that have requested access to the online recording.

END OF QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS DOCUMENT TN-577208/OJ S 54/2026