



Agora Learning Partnership

QUALIFYING QUESTIONNAIRE **Find a Tender Service (FTS)**

V1.0

ICT Managed Service Procurement

**To be completed and returned with supporting documents by
Midday on the 6th October 2023**

To: Jayshree Shah
E-mail to jayshree.shah@agoralearning.co.uk

To: Geoff Chandler
E-mail to geoff.chandler@moxton-education.com

Electronic Submission will be acceptable at this stage

BASIS AND CRITERIA FOR ACCEPTANCE

Managed Service

SHORT- LISTING PROCESS

This qualification questionnaire is divided into three sections.

Section A requires you to provide background information about your company.

Section B requires you to provide evidence that you satisfy the Trust's requirements to be considered for inviting to tender. Any items where the Trust at its sole discretion considers that you do not meet its requirements will preclude your company from being invited to tender.

Section C requires you to provide references that match as closely as possible the services to be provided under this contract. Referees will be asked to provide information about your performance and your delivery of the service to the contract standard. Preference will be given to companies who can provide at least one reference from organisations of a similar context and size to the Trust.

These responses will be ranked by the Trust and a minimum of the top 5 companies shall form the basis of the shortlist of companies invited to tender for a 5-year Trust-wide Managed service, provided that they continue to express an interest to do so.

Should applicants have any questions regarding this pre-qualification process or the information provided please submit them to Mr Geoff Chandler via e-mail, geoff.chandler@moxton-education.com (and cc: jayshree.shah@agoralearning.co.uk) or by telephone on 07970661087. The closing date for applicants to submit questions is Midday on the 21st September 2023. The Trust will provide an electronic response to any questions and to all applicants who have expressed an interest by 5pm on the 27th September 2023 **or before**.

Completed Qualification Questionnaires, with all relevant additional information, must be submitted to the Trust by **Midday on the 6th October 2023**. Submissions received after this date and time may not be accepted.

Companies are advised that failure to respond to all the questions within the Qualification Questionnaire and / or failure to submit the necessary supporting documents and / or failure of referees to respond to reference requests may render their submission non-compliant and as such they may not be considered to be included in the shortlist to receive the ITT from Agora Learning Partnership

Background

The Agora learning Partnership (Agora) encompasses 9 schools and circa 2,693 pupils in Hertfordshire.

The Trust Website is <https://agoralearning.co.uk/>

The current schools are as follows.

Academies	Pupils
Alban Wood Primary & Nursery	239
Bromet Primary	273
The Grange Academy	204
Meryfield Community Primary	450
The Orchard Primary	471
Oxhey Wood Primary	366
Warren Dell Primary	254
Waterside Academy	183
Wilbury Juniors	273

The Trust Head Office is currently at The Orchard Primary School

The Agora Learning Partnership (formerly the Herts for Learning Multi Academy Trust) is an inclusive, collaborative and forward looking Trust where we all work together, learn together and succeed together in order to give all of the children in our academies the best possible education and learning opportunities.

The nine schools who currently belong to our Partnership benefit greatly from working collaboratively, providing help and support to one another. The relationship between the schools and the Executive Team and Trustees is also deemed to be a strength of the organisation and the support offered by the Executive Team is very much personalised to the individual needs of our schools. However, this only enhances the provision at our schools, whilst enabling them to maintain their individual identities and the autonomy to deliver a curriculum that reflects their school communities and the needs of the children and young people that they serve; we believe this is the only way to achieve the very best educational standards within our schools and across our Trust – high standards that we continually strive for.

Throughout our Partnership, we believe success is measured by the number of children and young people who feel happy, safe and able to flourish, in order that they can reach their full potential educationally and in all other aspects of school and life. As a result, we

place children and young people at the heart of all the work that we do and the decisions that we make.

The aims of the Trust are:

- To develop a self-improving and self-sustaining system that results in rapid school improvement
- To utilise carefully planned, Partnership-wide collaboration to be the driving force for school improvement, resulting in children benefiting from a first class, enriched education that is fully inclusive, meeting their needs and preparing them for future life
- To improve the life chances of children and young people, enabling them to flourish and achieve the very best outcomes in all aspects of school life and beyond
- To raise standards and ensure this is reflected in each school's national reported outcomes, such as the Key Stage 2 Standard Assessment Tests
- To strive for all schools to be judged as 'outstanding' by Ofsted, ensuring all schools are judged 'good' by Ofsted as a minimum
- To be recognised as an employer of choice to maximise opportunities for the recruitment and retention of the best-quality staff
- To recognise and reward talented staff to improve recruitment and retention
- To continue to implement the 'local decisions for local children' approach in each of the Partnership schools and ensure schools maintain their individuality and identities

Going forward - This procurement

This procurement encompasses the items noted below. In essence, this procurement is all about identifying a single supplier to provide a fully outsourced managed service. At the sole discretion of the Trust any future schools that the Trust may incorporate into the Trust will also be added to the ICT contract. Any additional schools will co-terminate to the end same end date of the initial contract.

Further details regarding bid timescales are noted below but in terms of the managed service this is advertised as a 60 month contract with a maximum 5 year managed service with start and end dates as follows:

Service start date – 1st April 2024

Service end date – 31st March 2029

The new Managed Service Provider may also be required to deliver a range of technology and change management projects.

The companies identified from these shortlisting questions to receive the ITT for the Managed Service will then receive a detailed set of requirements. For the purposes of this shortlisting stage bidders should assume that the ITT will include, but is not be limited to;

- strategic advice and direction to the Trust regarding ICT
- a 42 week core service, incorporating on-site staff/visits as necessary

- Service desk
- local staffing that bidders deem necessary to deliver the SLA
- responsibility for design, specification, installation, and management of all ICT infrastructure
- supply of goods and services based on an agreed Best Value approach
- management of all ICT against an agreed SLA
- management of 3rd parties
- relevant monitoring, management, patching and reporting
- training – technical and curriculum as necessary
- risk registers and inventory management
- collective partnership targets aligned to the Trusts objectives

Bidders should note the following:

- The Trust will provide a standard contract as part of the ITT Pack
- It is not expected there may be a requirement for TUPE

Further details about the solution requirements will be provided to those bidders who are shortlisted to receive the ITT pack.

The value of this procurement has been set with an upper limit of **£2.1 million** over a maximum 60 month period.

To be clear, the upper limit noted above includes headroom for an additional 5 schools that may or may not join the Trust during the lifetime of the Contract, it is not a budgetary figure.

Selection Criteria

The objective of the evaluation process is to assess the responses to this questionnaire and select potential contractors to proceed to the next stage of the procurement. Shortlisting will be based on the matters set out below.

- Economic and Financial Standing – contractors must be in a sound financial position and able to demonstrate appropriate financial viability to perform the service to participate in a procurement of this size. (Please answer questions as the bidding company, but if the bidding company is part of a Group please provide 3 years of Group accounts in addition).
- Contractor Track Record - contractors must be able to demonstrate a successful track record of providing similar works to those required by this procurement. As well as information provided as part of this SQ, this may include due diligence carried out by the Trust which can include, but is not limited to, contracting the references provided.
- Supplier technical capacity and capability – assessment of the technical ability and core competences of contractors.

Stage 1

The information supplied by applicants will first be checked for completeness and compliance with eligibility requirements before responses are evaluated. The Trust reserves the right to reject/disqualify any application that is incomplete or non-compliant.

It is common to get many suppliers expressing interest by submitting an SQ. As such, completeness and compliance **will** be strictly enforced, and suppliers will **not** be contacted for missing information.

Stage 2

Selection for inclusion within the tender list will be based on evaluation of the SQ questions on the following criteria.

Technical capacity

1. Evidence of at least 5 years' experience in the provision of Managed Services to the Education sector along with appropriate in-house systems, technical capability and key personnel with good technical knowledge. This includes evidence of ability to deliver to contract standards drawn from references.

Economic and financial standing

2. Evidence of economic and financial standing in respect of viability to perform the services including the submission and evaluation of three year's detailed financial accounts **including turnover and profit before tax**, the latest not more than 18 months old.

Failure to provide this information will result in automatic exclusion from the shortlist.

3. Suitable insurance cover. Public Liability to a minimum of £5,000,000 per occurrence, Employer's Liability to a minimum of £5,000,000 (or statements that these will be obtained if awarded the relevant contract(s).

Failure to provide evidence/assurance of this cover will result in automatic exclusion from the shortlist.

4. A sound record of and clear policies of quality standards including, health & safety, e-safety, GDPR and equality.

Failure to provide this information will result in automatic exclusion from the shortlist.

The Trust reserves the right not to select a potential contractor who has been assessed as having material weaknesses in one particular area covered by these initial selection questions, notwithstanding acceptable or even strong responses in all other areas.

The Trust gives no guarantee of the volume of work to be awarded under the contract and reserves the right to carry out work in-house.

Timescales

We expect the following timeframes to be adhered to following the submission of the Initial selection questions. These timeframes are provided as indication only to support bidder planning and cannot be guaranteed.

Managed Service - Agora	
SQ available	7th September
SQ Clarifications open	7th September
SQ Clarifications close	21st September
Latest date for last clarification responses	27th September
SQ Submission date	6th October
Indicative Timescales	
ITT Stage meeting for shortlisted bidders	16th October
Issue of ITT	16th October
Clarifications open	16th October
Clarifications close	3rd November
Latest date for last clarification responses	10th November
ITT Submission	17th November
Bidder Presentations	27th November
Trust Authorisation Process	28th November to 1st December
Award decision notice sent to bidders	1st December
Alcatel Period	10 days - Until 18th December
Transition Period inc TUPE if necessary	Spring Term
Cloud migration planning	Early Spring term
Service Starts	1st April 2024 - Beginning of Easter Holidays

Note: The Trust reserves the right to award the contract following Stage 2 ITT stage presentations and full review if it deems that no negotiation phase is needed.

Managed Service Partner
Initial Selection QUESTIONNAIRE

Questions should be answered in the name of the applying company, not a parent or holding company (unless indicated to do so in the questions).

Supporting documents should be included where applicable. Please do NOT embed documents in this response – if we cannot open an embedded document where one is requested, the questions will be deemed incomplete.

Section A - Supplier details	
Question	Response
1.1 (a) Full name of the potential supplier submitting the information	Mandatory Response
1.1 (b) - (i) Registered office address (if applicable)	Mandatory Response
1.1 (b) - (ii) Registered website address (if applicable)	
1.1 (c) Please check the relevant box to indicate your trading status	i) a public limited company <input type="checkbox"/> Yes
	ii) a limited company <input type="checkbox"/> Yes
	iii) a limited liability partnership <input type="checkbox"/> Yes
	iv) other partnership <input type="checkbox"/> Yes
	v) sole trader <input type="checkbox"/> Yes
	vi) third sector <input type="checkbox"/> Yes
	vii) other (please specify) <input type="checkbox"/> Yes
1.1 (d) Date of registration in country of origin	Mandatory Response
1.1 (e) Company registration number (if applicable)	Mandatory Response
1.1 (f) Charity registration number (if applicable)	Mandatory Response
1.1 (g) Head office DUNS number (if applicable)	
1.1 (h) Registered VAT number	

1.1 (i) - (i) If applicable, is your organisation registered with the appropriate professional or trade register(s) in the member state where it is established?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Not Applicable	
1.1 (i) - (ii) If you responded yes to 1.1(i) - (i), please provide the relevant details, including the registration number(s).	<input type="checkbox"/>	
1.1 (j) - (i) Is it a legal requirement in the state where you are established for you to possess a particular authorisation, or be a member of a particular organisation in order to provide the services specified in this procurement?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
1.1 (j) - (ii) If you responded yes to 1.1(j) - (i), please provide additional details of what is required and confirmation that you have complied with this.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
1.1 (k) Trading name(s) that will be used if successful in this procurement	<input type="checkbox"/>	
1.1 (l) Please check the relevant boxes to indicate whether you fall within any of these classifications	i) Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE)	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes
	ii) Sheltered workshop	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes
	iii) Public service mutual	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes
1.1 (m) Are you a Small, Medium or Micro Enterprise (SME)?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
1.1 (n) Details of Persons of Significant Control (PSC), where appropriate: - Name; - Date of birth; - Nationality; - Country, state or province where the PSC usually lives; - Service address; - The date he or she became a PSC in relation to the company (for existing companies the 6 April 2016 should be used); - Which conditions for being a PSC are met;	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Not Applicable	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Over 25% up to (and including) 50%, - More than 50% and less than 75%, - 75% or more¹. 	
<p>1.1 (o) Details of immediate parent company:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Full name of the immediate parent company - Registered office address (<i>if applicable</i>) - Registration number (<i>if applicable</i>) - Head office DUNS number (<i>if applicable</i>) - Head office VAT number (<i>if applicable</i>) 	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Not Applicable</p>
<p>1.1 (p) Details of ultimate parent company:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Full name of the ultimate parent company - Registered office address (<i>if applicable</i>) - Registration number (<i>if applicable</i>) - Head office DUNS number (<i>if applicable</i>) - Head office VAT number (<i>if applicable</i>) 	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Not Applicable</p>
<p>Please note: A criminal record check for relevant convictions may be undertaken for the preferred suppliers and the persons of significant in control of them.</p>	

<p>Section A - Bidding model</p>	
<p>Please check the relevant box to indicate whether you are;</p>	
<p>1.2 (a) - (i) Are you bidding as the lead contact for a group of economic operators?</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p>If yes, please provide details listed in questions 1.2 (a) (ii), (a) (iii) and to 1.2 (b) (i), (b) (ii), 1.3, Section 2 and 3.</p> <p>If no, and you are a supporting bidder please provide the name of your group at 1.2 (a) (ii)</p>

	for reference purposes, and complete 1.3, Section 2 and 3.
1.2 (a) - (ii) Name of group of economic operators <i>(if applicable)</i>	██████████
1.2 (a) - (iii) Proposed legal structure if the group of economic operators intends to form a named single legal entity prior to signing a contract, if awarded. If you do not propose to form a single legal entity, please explain the legal structure.	██████████
1.2(b) - (i) Are you or, if applicable, the group of economic operators proposing to use sub-contractors?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
<p>1.2 (b) - (ii) If you responded “Yes” in 1.2 (b) – (i), please provide additional details for each sub-contractor in the following table: we may ask them to complete this form as well.</p> <p>Name ██████████</p> <p>Registered Address ██████████</p> <p>Trading status ██████████</p> <p>Company registration number ██████████</p> <p>Head Office DUNS number <i>(if applicable)</i> ██████████</p> <p>Registered VAT number ██████████</p> <p>Type of organisation ██████████</p> <p>SME <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p>The role each sub-contractor will take in providing the supplies e.g. key deliverables ██████████</p> <p>The approximate % of contractual obligations assigned to each sub-contractor ██████████</p>	

Exclusion Grounds (Self-certification)

Please answer the following questions in full.

Please check the relevant box to indicate a “Yes” or a “No” response.

Section B - Grounds for Mandatory Exclusion		
<p>2.1 (a) Regulations 57(1) and (2)</p> <p>The detailed grounds for mandatory exclusion of an organisation are set out on this web page, which should be referred to before completing these questions.</p> <p>Please indicate if, within the past five years you, your organisation or any other person who has powers of representation, decision or control in the organisation been convicted anywhere in the world of any of the offences within the summary below and listed on the webpage.</p>	Please indicate your selection:	
(i) Participation in a criminal organisation. If Yes, please provide details at 2.1(b)	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
(ii) Corruption. If Yes, please provide details at 2.1(b)	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
(iii) Fraud. If Yes, please provide details at 2.1(b)	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
(iv) Terrorist offences or offences linked to terrorist activities If Yes, please provide details at 2.1(b)	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
(v) Money laundering or terrorist financing If Yes, please provide details at 2.1(b)	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
(vi) Child labour and other forms of trafficking in human beings If Yes, please provide details at 2.1(b)	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
<p>2.1 (b) If you have answered yes to question 2.1(a), please provide further details.</p> <p>Date of conviction, specify which of the grounds listed the conviction was for, and the reasons for conviction,</p> <p>Identity of who has been convicted</p>		

If the relevant documentation is available electronically please provide the web address, issuing authority, precise reference of the documents.



2.2 If you have answered Yes to any of the points above have measures been taken to demonstrate the reliability of the organisation despite the existence of a relevant ground for exclusion? (Self Cleaning)

Yes

No

2.3 (a) Regulation 57(3)

Has it been established, for your organisation by a judicial or administrative decision having final and binding effect in accordance with the legal provisions of any part of the United Kingdom or the legal provisions of the country in which the organisation is established (if outside the UK), that the organisation is in breach of obligations related to the payment of tax or social security contributions?

Yes

No

2.3 (b) If you have answered yes to question 2.3(a), please provide further details. Please also confirm you have paid, or have entered into a binding arrangement with a view to paying, the outstanding sum including where applicable any accrued interest and/or fines.



Please Note: The Trust reserves the right to use its discretion to exclude a potential supplier where it can demonstrate by any appropriate means that the potential supplier is in breach of its obligations relating to the non-payment of taxes or social security contributions.

Section 3 - Information about the Wider Group

If you have indicated in this Selection Questionnaire question 1.2 that you are part of a wider group, please provide further details below:

Name of organisation [REDACTED]

Relationship to the Supplier completing these questions [REDACTED]

3.1 Are you able to provide parent company accounts if requested to at a later stage?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
3.2 If yes, would the parent company be willing to provide a guarantee if necessary?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
3.3 If no, would you be able to obtain a guarantee elsewhere (e.g. from a bank)?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No

Data Protection

Requirements under the General Data Protection Regulation and Data Protection Act 2018

(Please note that we would like to see summary answers in this section – while we expect policy documents to be submitted, do not direct us to a document for the answer)

4.1 Are you registered with the UK Information Commissioners Office?
If yes, please provide your registration number –

<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
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4.2 Please state your overall approach towards the EU General Data Protection Regulation and UK Data Protection Act 2018

[REDACTED]

4.3 What is your data retention policy and rules

[REDACTED]

4.4 Access controls and information – what is your policy on access controls? Can you provide evidence of certification or adopting codes of practice?

[REDACTED]

4.5 Do you use any subcontractors to deliver the service? If so, how do you select them and obtain assurances on the data protection and information security practices?

4.6 What contractual measures do you have in place to ensure personal data is processed compliantly and securely by sub-contractors?

4.7 Do you have an incident management process that includes effective management of data security incidents? What is the process for managing personal data security incidents?

4.8 Training and awareness for staff and contractors – what data protection and information security training and awareness raising is in place?

Section C - Trust Specific Questions / Evidence

5.1 Key Personnel

Please name the key personnel who would be involved in this contract if your company were to be awarded the contract, and outline their technical qualifications and length of relevant experience

[Add key personnel here](#)

5.2 Accounts

Please submit copies of audited or approved accounts (including group consolidated accounts if the company is part of a group) for the most recent three financial years, **showing turnover and profit before tax** and provide a summary of this information below

Financial Year	Turnover	Profit before Tax

5.3 Conflicts of Interest

Please detail what measures are in place to avoid any conflict of interest that could prejudice independence and objectivity during the tendering process and performance of the contract.

(Please note that this question is not asking *if* there are any existing conflicts of interest, it is asking what measure you have/will put in place to avoid conflict of interest)

Add measures here.

5.4 Insurance

The Trust requires all of its contractors to maintain;

- (a) Employer's Liability insurance to a minimum value of £5,000,000;

Proof of insurance Enclosed? **YES** **NO** If not, explain why?

- (b) Public Liability insurance to a minimum of £5,000,000 per claim;

Proof of insurance Enclosed? **YES** **NO** If not, explain why?

Please submit copies of cover notes showing that such insurance policies are in place or provide a statement confirming that your company would take out such insurance cover if awarded the contract.

5.5 Health & Safety

- (a) Please enclose a copy of your Health and Safety Policy (covering General Policy, Organisation and Arrangements) and any codes of safe work practices issued to employees.

Enclosed? **YES** **NO**

- (b) Please enclose details of prosecutions or notices served on your firm by the Health and Safety Executive (or otherwise) in the last three years

Enclosed? **YES** **NO** **N/A**

5.6 Eligibility to Work

Please enclose a copy of your procedures which should include:-

- (a) assurance of checks on the eligibility of prospective employees to work in the UK;

Enclosed? **YES** **NO**

- (b) requirements for employees to disclose criminal convictions; and

Enclosed? **YES** **NO**

(c) requirement for employees to undertake an Enhanced DBS Check
Enclosed? **YES** **NO**

5.7 Environmental Policy

Please enclose a copy of your environmental policy

Enclosed? **YES** **NO**

5.8 Other Policies

Please enclose a copy of your policies for the following

- (a) Data Protection Policy
- (b) GDPR
- (c) E-safety

Enclosed? **YES** **NO**

5.9 Modern Slavery Act 2015

Are you a relevant commercial organisation as defined by section 54 (Transparency in supply chains etc) of the Modern Slavery Act 2015

YES **N/A**

5.10 If you have answered yes to 5.9 is your organisation compliant with the annual reporting requirements contained within Section 54 of the Modern Slavery Act of 2015

YES (Please provide URL) **No** (Please explain below)

6.0 Your Company

Please provide a brief history & overview of your company including any relevant partnerships and associations.

[Your answer should be no longer than 1000 words – please add the word count at the end]

...

**INFORMATION ABOUT CURRENT OR RECENT SIMILAR CONTRACTS PERFORMED
BY YOUR COMPANY AND REFERENCES**

OUTLINE OF COMPANY'S EXPERIENCE

Please provide details of your company's experience in the last three years of providing *managed services to the Education sector relating, where possible, to the sort of environment that the Agora Learning Partnership is tendering for.*

Your answer should be no longer than 1000 words – please add the word count at the end

REFERENCES

Referring to the information provided above, please provide the names, full addresses and telephone numbers of two organisations, for which your company is or have within the last 3 years provided services relevant to the Trust's requirements and to whom reference can be made as to the standards provided by, and the performance of, your company.

Preference will be given to companies who can provide at least one reference from organisations of a similar context and size to the Trust, i.e. a school Primary MAT.

Be aware that it is your company responsibility to ensure that referees respond in a timely fashion as the responses to reference questions will form a material element in the evaluation at this stage

Referee 1

Name of Organisation	Contact name	Nature of contract	Postal & E-mail address	Telephone number
Contract Value PA	£			

Referee 2

Name of Organisation	Contact name	Nature of contract	Postal & E-mail address	Telephone number
Contract Value PA	£			

Contact details and Declaration

I declare that to the best of my knowledge the answers submitted and information contained in this document are correct and accurate.

I declare that, upon request and without delay I will provide the certificates or documentary evidence referred to in this document.

I understand that the information will be used in the selection process to assess my organisation's suitability to be invited to participate further in this procurement.

I understand that the authority may reject this submission in its entirety if there is a failure to answer all the relevant questions fully, or if false/misleading information or content is provided in any section.

I am aware of the consequences of serious misrepresentation.

1.3 (a) Contact Name	Mandatory Response
1.3 (b) Name of Organisation	Mandatory Response
1.3 (c) Role in Organisation	Mandatory Response
1.3 (d) Phone Number	Mandatory Response
1.3 (e) E-mail Address	Mandatory Response
1.3 (f) Postal Address	Mandatory Response
1.3 (g) Signature (electronic is acceptable)	Mandatory Response
1.3 (h) Date	Mandatory Response

Please note all correspondence regarding this Questionnaire and the subsequent ITT process will be sent to the person described in 1.3 above.