



Aboriginal and Torres Strait
Islander Health Practice
Chinese Medicine
Chiropractic
Dental
Medical
Medical Radiation Practice
Nursing and Midwifery
Occupational Therapy
Optometry
Osteopathy
Pharmacy
Physiotherapy
Podiatry
Psychology

Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency

Request for Tender –

Review of the *Midwife standards for practice*

13 May 2014

Part A – Information for tenderers

1. Purpose of this document

This document is a Request for Tender (RFT) and has been prepared to provide information to assist prospective tenderers in the preparation and submission of tenders to conduct a research project to review and develop *Midwife standards for practice*, incorporating a review of the existing *National competency standards for the midwife*.

In issuing this RFT, the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA) seeks to identify tenderers:

- able to provide the goods or services in the manner set out in the specification
- able to demonstrate a commitment and ability to working in collaboration with AHPRA over the term of any agreed contractual period to continuously seek improvements in value, efficiency and productivity in connection with the provision of the goods or services, and
- prepared to work with AHPRA to continue to identify opportunities for improvement in the quality and level of service provided for the mutual benefit of both the AHPRA and the contractor.

2. Background

AHPRA

The Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency was established in July 2010 to improve the quality and safety of Australia's health services through a modernised national regulatory system for health professionals.

AHPRA has an office in each state and territory responsible for the majority of operational matters, and there is a national office in Melbourne. AHPRA reports to the Australian Health Workforce Ministerial Council (Ministerial Council). AHPRA supports the operations of the National Boards for each profession covered by the National Scheme, and the state and territory boards and committees established by the National Boards.

The services provided by AHPRA to the National Boards employ best practice approaches to regulation and cover registration functions, the management of a national public register of health practitioners, the handling of notifications on behalf of the National Boards and, subject to decisions by states and territories, responsibility to the National Boards for the highest standards of professional investigations and disciplinary prosecutions.

The fourteen health professions included in the scheme are:

- Chiropractic
- Dental
- Medical
- Nursing and midwifery
- Optometry
- Osteopathy
- Pharmacy
- Physiotherapy
- Podiatry
- Psychology

- Chinese medicine
- Medical radiation practice
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island Health Practice
- Occupational therapy

The contract

The contract for services is with AHPRA on behalf of the Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia (National Board) who own and sponsor the project. The Executive Officer is the representative of the National Board for all matters related to the project. The Program Manager and Policy Manager will attend to detailed matters with respect to project delivery and policy development respectively on the Executive Officer's behalf.

3. Overview

AHPRA is seeking suitably qualified and experienced parties to develop *Midwife standards for practice*, incorporating a review and analysis of the current National Board's *National competency standards for the midwife* (January 2006) to ensure that the standards for practice reflect current midwifery practice and are contemporary, relevant and useful. The recommended standards for practice may not be aspirational but must reflect actual current practice.

Key dates for this tender are indicated below. These dates are advised as a **guide only** to projected timelines. AHPRA will make every effort to maintain this schedule, but reserves the right to vary dates.

Key dates

Request for tender released	13 May 2014
Last day for questions / clarification	30 May 2014
Responses (if questions received) published on website	3 June 2014
Closing date for submission of tenders	13 June 2014 (2pm AEST)
Last day for short listing responses	1 July 2014
Interviews conducted (if required) by	15 July 2014
All tenderers advised of tender outcome by	31 July 2014
Contract Commencement Date	12 August 2014
Contract Completion Date (estimated)	27 November 2015

The period of service is to commence on the Commencement Date (refer to [Key dates table](#)). The successful tender will provide a project management plan, communication strategy and plan and a risk matrix in liaison with the Program Manager for presenting to the 2 September 2014 Policy Committee meeting at project inception.

The maximum contract period may be the nominated Completion Date as per the *Key dates* table. Note: Dates are indicative only.

AHPRA, in consultation with the National Board, reserves the right to extend the contract period as specified in the contract.

4. The tenderer

The successful tenderer will require a background relevant to the procurement and demonstrated capacity to successfully provide the required goods or services.

Status of entity

The tenderer must be a legal entity with which AHPRA is able to contract. The tender submission must describe and provide evidence of the legal status of the tenderer, including their Australian Business Number (ABN).

Understanding of requirements

The tenderer must demonstrate an understanding of the requirements of the tender.

Relevant experience

The tender submission must describe the experience of the tenderer in relation to the provision of similar requirements of the tender. References from or contact details of at least two clients for whom the tenderer previously has carried out similar projects must be provided. Referees must not be members of the Evaluation Panel, and should preferably be from outside AHPRA.

Financial, technical, planning and other resource capability

The tender submission must provide sufficient supporting documentation to enable AHPRA to satisfy itself as to the financial, technical, planning and other resource capability of the tenderer to successfully provide the requirements of the tender.

Staff competencies

The tender submission must describe the minimum competencies of staff and policies to maintain competency over the period of the contract.

5. Price

Prices quoted should be competitive and commensurate with the key requirements, and/or outputs/deliverables (as specified).

6. Price variation

Any variation to price over the period of the contract must be quantified and justified. Proposed mechanisms for variations must be included in the Tender Response. This should include provision for any extension options (if specified).

Part B – Specification

1. Introduction

The *National competency standards for the midwife* were originally developed and published in January 2006, under the auspices of the Australian Nursing and Midwifery Council (ANMC) working in conjunction with the state and territory nursing and midwifery regulatory authorities. These national standards are an integral component of the regulatory framework which guides midwives to provide safe and competent care. With the commencement of the National Scheme, this publication became the property of the National Board, as the body responsible for the regulation of midwives. Although the design was updated to rebrand the competency standards to reflect current ownership in August 2013, the content or intent of the original document has not changed and has not been reviewed since 2006.

The current *National competency standards for the midwife* are the core competency standards by which the midwife's performance is assessed to obtain and retain registration to practice in Australia. These core competency standards provide a framework for assessing competence and are used;

- as part of the annual renewal of registration process
- to assess midwives educated overseas seeking employment in Australia
- to assess midwives returning to work after breaks in service
- as part of professional conduct matters
- to communicate to consumers the standards that they can expect from midwives
- in the development of midwifery curricula by universities and
- to assess student and new graduate performance

Since the *National competency standards for the midwife* were published in 2006, the role and scope of practice for the midwife throughout Australia, the model of education and training leading to registration, and the regulatory framework within which registration of nurses and midwives occurs, have developed substantially.

The move to a national system of regulation and accreditation of health related courses in 2010 provides the catalyst for a review of the midwife standards for practice to ensure they reflect contemporary practice and are congruent with legislative requirements.

2. Objective

The objective of this procurement is to develop a revised document called the '*Midwife standards for practice*', for presentation to the National Board for approval and endorsement. This document is expected to reflect current (not aspirational) evidence-based practice, be contemporary, relevant and useful.

3. Scope

The scope is separated into phases to show the components of the work. The work stages are expected to be completed sequentially with the findings of the research phase being incorporated into the revised standards before they are validated. However, extensive stakeholder consultation will be a key component of all phases.

The scope of this procurement includes:

1. Research phase:
 - 1.1 An extensive review of the current scope of practice and role of midwives across Australia noting the following:
 - Variations in practice between jurisdictions and / or sectors
 - Impact of employment arrangements on role and scope of practice, and
 - Relevant legislation and regulations.
 - 1.2 The research must involve:
 - A comprehensive literature review of nationally and internationally published material
 - Focus groups comprising consumer representatives, midwives, members of professional bodies, chief nurses and other key stakeholders from a variety of practice settings and geographical locations
 - Interviews (one-on-one) with National Board, DOHA and Chief nurses
 - 1.3 This phase will also need to consider any potential impacts arising from relevant current research and projects being undertaken by Health Workforce Australia (HWA)
 - 1.4 Gap analysis and development of revised standards are expected to reflect innovative, original thinking about the standards and will include:
 - Analysis of the gap between the current *National competency standards for the midwife* (2006) and the research findings
 - A first draft of standards for practice accepted and approved by the National Board to be considered prior to the observation phase
2. Observation phase
 - 2.1 Observation of midwives in a variety of practice settings and geographical locations, review of 1st draft of standards, gap analysis and development of 2nd draft of standards for consideration and approval by the Policy Committee and National Board
 - 2.2 The consultants will be required to develop an observational tool for approval by the Policy committee of the National Board
3. Consultation phase
 - 3.1 Once reviewed and recommended for approval by the Policy Committee of the National Board, and then approved by National Board, the successful tender (consultants) will forward the discussion document and second draft standards for preliminary consultation with identified key stakeholders in line with the AHPRA consultation guidelines.
 - 3.2 Feedback will be incorporated into a revised (if necessary) 3rd draft, to be submitted to the Policy Committee of the National Board for approval prior to the National Board approving the draft standards for release for public consultation.
 - 3.3 The consultants will invite key groups to provide written comments on the 3rd draft of the revised standards. All interested parties will be invited via the website to comment. The consultants will review the comments and feedback and then revise the draft standards, where appropriate
4. Validation phase
 - 4.1 The consultants are expected to validate the draft midwife standards for practice across a range of practice settings in a variety of geographical locations by observing selected participants in real time.
 - 4.2 The consultants will be required to develop the validation tool for approval by the Policy committee of the National Board and then pilot prior to commencing the validation phase (observations of midwife practice aligned with the new / revised draft standards)
5. A report from each of these phases will contribute to the final report with submission of revised standards and recommendations

Activities excluded – not in scope:

- Standards for practice for registered nurses, enrolled nurses, nurse practitioners and re-entry to nursing and midwifery
- Reviews specifically associated with internationally qualified nurses
- Documenting aspirational practices

4. Deliverables

The deliverables / outputs of this procurement, including a project management plan with milestones, timelines and quality requirements, a communications plan and risk matrix at project initiation.

Other key deliverables include:

1. (Revised) Draft *Midwife standards for practice*

The drafts will be of a quality standard that reflects outcomes from a comprehensive literature review, consultation via focus groups and interviews with key stakeholders, and observations of midwives in geographically dispersed varied practice settings. The draft standards need to be of acceptable standard to the National Board for release for preliminary and subsequent public consultations with stakeholders. A validation phase to align the new standards with Midwifery practice is inclusive in this project.

2. Monthly project status reports
3. Project phase reports on literature review, observations, draft standards and validation phase
4. Agenda papers to accompany deliverables submitted to the Policy Committee and National Board
5. The final report will be comprehensive and include the following based on deliverables:
 - 5.1 Results of the literature review
 - 5.2 Methodology and findings from the research and views of the stakeholders
 - 5.3 Analysis / synthesis between current National midwife competency standards and recommended Midwife standards for practice
 - 5.4 Reports and thematic analyses from the consultation phases
 - 5.5 Submission of observation and validation instruments and National Ethics Application Form
 - 5.6 Reports and thematic analyses from the observation and validation phases
 - 5.7 Recommendations for:
 - 5.7.1 amendments to current competency standards whilst ensuring standards for practice reflect contemporary practice
 - 5.7.2 appropriate educational preparation reflected in the accreditation standards for courses leading to registration as midwife
 - 5.7.3 future evaluation strategies
 - 5.7.4 transition strategies including timing and points of coordination with ANMAC
 - 5.7.5 communication and dissemination strategies
6. A final report in a format suitable for publication on the NMBA website available in both MS Word and PDF formats
7. Quality requirements are established by the Policy Committee, the National Board and the AHPRA project steering committee
8. All reports that form the deliverables for this project must use AHPRA templates and editorial style guide.

Key dates (indicative)

Contract commencement date	12 August 2014
Project plan (timeline and communications plan) – attendance Policy Committee meeting	21 August 2014 (2 nd Sept 2014)
Literature review, initial key stakeholder consultations, 1 st draft of standards with discussion report for Policy Committee and NMBA	24 October 2014
Work based observations and interviews report and analysis against 1 st draft, evidence informing a 2 nd draft of standards	20 February 2015
2 nd draft of <i>Midwife standards for practice</i> for Policy Committee and NMBA approval for preliminary consultation	March 2015
2 nd Draft for preliminary consultation released for 4 weeks	April 2015
Review and analysis to inform 3 rd Draft <i>Midwife standards for practice</i> (approved by the National Board for public consultation 8 weeks)	July - August 2015
Review and analysis to inform 4 th draft – for validation phase	September 2015
Final draft of <i>Midwife standards for practice</i> and comprehensive report with recommendations submitted to the Policy Committee of the National Board for recommendation for approval	October 2015
Final draft of <i>Midwife standards for practice</i> and comprehensive report with recommendations submitted to the National Board	November 2014
Contract Completion Date	November 2015

5. Evaluation of tenders

The following evaluation criteria will be used for the evaluation of all tenders and determination of the successful tenderer. Complying proposals will be assessed on a value for money basis. While proposals must be within budget limits, price is neither scored nor weighted.

All evaluation criteria are considered 'mandatory' and therefore must be met. Failure against these criteria will mean the tender is designated 'non-compliant': non-compliant tenders may be rejected without further consideration unless clearly indicated as alternative, non-conforming proposals and documentation is provided that supports their validity in achieving the requirements of this procurement.

Tenderers are to provide their response to the evaluation criteria below, by completing the tender response at Part D of this document.

Criterion #	Criterion name	Descriptor	Expected bidder's response	Criterion weighted value
1	Understanding the Midwife competency standards in the context of the health professional regulatory system	Detailed knowledge and understanding of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the existing competency standards in relation to the purpose of the standards in the registration process of midwives the National Board's approach to standards for performance in the context of the National Regulation and Accreditation Scheme 	Bidder must demonstrate a strong understanding of the national accreditation and regulation scheme and where the standards for practice intersect with current midwifery practice.	Vital (3)
2.	Qualifications and experience of key staff	Appropriate and relevant capability (credentials and experience of at least 5 years) in research design and implementation to ensure scientific principles are applied to standards development. Factors include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> demonstration of contemporary knowledge and understanding of recent developments in midwifery practice and education research experience that entails literature reviews, focus groups in diverse settings, obtaining ethics approvals and critical analysis and reporting on findings 	Bidder must demonstrate experience in similar research work that has been delivered successfully, including the ability to reflect research findings into an easily accessible report with recommendations and sets of standards	Vital (3)
3.	Research methodology	The ability to clearly document and articulate the research methodology to be used and the rationale for the selection.	The bidder's approach described must be valid, innovative and effective to ensure delivery of project outcomes and deliverables as specified.	Highly important (2)
4.	Proposed research organisation	Satisfactory financial, technical support and project management capability to fulfil the specifications of the project as reflected in a submitted workplan with achievable milestones /project outcomes and a proposed budget with fees payable schedule.	The bidder is available to fulfil the requirements of the tender specification at the times specific and within the designated budget proposed.	Highly important (2)
5.	Communication and stakeholder engagement	Demonstrated experience and excellent track record of successfully engaging, motivating and communicating with a diverse range of stakeholders	Bidder must be able to provide evidence of stakeholder engagement and a proposed draft high level communications plan	Vital (3)

Scoring

Tenders will be scored against the following scale:

Evaluation	Score
Exceeds all aspects of the evaluation criterion	4
Exceeds some aspects of evaluation criterion (and meets all other aspects of the evaluation criterion)	3
Meets the evaluation criterion	2
Fails some aspects of the evaluation criterion (and meets all other aspects of the evaluation criterion)	1
Fails all aspects of the evaluation criterion.	0

Weighting

The evaluation criteria have been weighted to reflect their relative importance. The weighting scale is:

Importance of criterion	Weighting
Vital	3
Highly important	2
Desirable	1

Part C – Conditions of tender

1. General conditions

Organisations or individuals wishing to tender should submit their proposal in accordance with AHPRA's requirements as set out in this document. The conditions under which a response must be made are indicated in this section. Tenderers should familiarise themselves with this document and ensure that their proposals conform. Tenderers are deemed to have:

- examined the tender documents and other information made available by AHPRA to tenderers for the purpose of tendering.
- examined all information relevant to risks, contingencies, and other circumstances having an effect on their tender and which is obtainable by making reasonable inquiries.
- examined statutory requirements and satisfied themselves they are not participating in any anti-competitive, collusive, deceptive or misleading practices in structuring and submitting their tender.
- satisfied themselves as to the correctness and sufficiency of their tenders and that their tendered prices are GST inclusive and cover the cost of complying with all conditions of tender and matters and things necessary for due and proper performance and completion of work described in the tender documents (or if the goods or services are GST exempt, provided reasons for this).

Evaluation process

Clarification of tender: Where, in the opinion of AHPRA, a tender is unclear, AHPRA may seek clarification from the tenderer. Failure to supply clarification to the satisfaction of AHPRA may render the tender liable to disqualification.

Short-listing: Tenders will be evaluated against the indicated criteria. An initial evaluation will be used to short-list proposals. Tenderers not short-listed may be notified in writing at this stage that their tender has been unsuccessful.

Interviews: Following short-listing, one or more tenderers may be approached to make a presentation to and be interviewed by the Evaluation Panel to provide clarification or further information.

Best and final offers: Tenderers may be invited, as part of the tendering process, to submit a best and final offer in relation to all or certain aspects of their respective tenders as described in this document (in particular, refer 'Negotiations and Best and Final Offers').

Notification of final outcome: All tenderers may be advised in writing of the final outcome of the tender evaluation, including the identity of the successful tenderer.

Acceptance: Non complying tenders may be rejected. AHPRA may not accept the lowest priced tender and may not accept any tender.

Request For Tender

Status: This Request For Tender (RFT) is not an offer. This RFT is an invitation for persons to submit a proposal for the provision of the goods or services set out in this RFT.

Accuracy: While all due care has been taken in connection with the preparation of this RFT, AHPRA does not warrant the accuracy of the content of the RFT and AHPRA will not be liable for any omission from the RFT.

Additions and amendments: AHPRA reserves the right to change any information in, or to issue addenda to, this RFT.

Representations: No representation made by or on behalf of AHPRA in relation to the RFT (or its subject matter) will be binding on AHPRA unless that representation is expressly incorporated into the contract(s) ultimately entered into between AHPRA and a tenderer.

Explanations:

- Verbal explanations or instructions given prior to acceptance of a proposal shall not bind AHPRA.
- Reference in this document to a contract means the Agreement included with this document, unless otherwise stated.
- References to AHPRA mean Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency, unless otherwise stated.

Confidentiality: All persons (including tenderers) obtaining or receiving the RFT and any other information in connection with the RFT or the tendering process must keep the contents of the RFT and such other information confidential. AHPRA may require persons and organisations wishing to access or obtain a copy of this RFT or

certain parts of it to execute a deed of confidentiality (in a form required by, or satisfactory to, AHPRA) before or after access is granted.

Financial assessments

AHPRA reserves the right to engage a third party to carry out assessments of tenderers' financial, technical, planning and other resource capability.

Format of submission

A Tender Response is included at Part D of this document. Tenderers must address their responses to the specifications and will be assessed against the evaluation criteria. The Tender Response is structured to reflect the information requirements of this tender and tenderers are advised to use the Tender Response in preparation of their tenders.

Legal entity

Tenderers must provide proof of their legal status. A legal agreement/contract can only be entered into by AHPRA with an agency or individual with legal status established under local corporation's law.

AHPRA prefers to deal with suppliers or providers who have an Australian Business Number (ABN), unless there is clear evidence that the relevant supply is not assessable for income tax purposes (hobby or recreational interest).

Consortia and trustees

There are three legal and management options available to consortia wishing to tender. Each of these types of arrangements is acceptable to AHPRA:

- Incorporate as a single body
- Each Member signs as part of a Non Incorporated Consortium
- Subcontracting by the Lead Agency to members of the Consortium.

Where the tenderer is a consortium, the tender must indicate which parts of the service it is proposed that each entity comprising the Consortium would provide and how the Contractor and Sub-contractor(s) would relate to each other to ensure full provision of the required service.

Where a trustee structure is being used by a tenderer, the tenderer may be required to provide a copy of the relevant trust deed or a letter from the tenderer's solicitors confirming that the trustee is fully authorised to enter into the proposed contract, is acting within its powers under the trust deed and can be indemnified from the assets of the trust.

Form and application of agreement

The successful tenderer will be required to enter into AHPRA's standard form of agreement, a sample copy of which is at [Attachment 1](#).

A contract for delivery or provision of goods or services described in this document does not exist until both parties have executed the applicable standard AHPRA agreement.

Contractors will be required to comply with appropriate statutory document retention practices, which may include long-term storage of electronic and hard copy documents for up to 25 years.

Statement of departures

Tenderers must state in their tenders that there are no departures from the specification (Part B) of this document and the conditions of AHPRA's standard form of agreement included with this document or, where there are departures to these sections, submit with their tender a tabulated statement detailing the departures in order of the relevant clauses. By submission of a tender in response to this document, tenderers are deemed to have accepted these Conditions of Tender.

2. Lodgement of proposals

Proposals in response to the Request for Tender must be received by **13 June 2014** and emailed to the following address: tenders@ahpra.gov.au

Completed proposals must be received at the above e-mail address by precisely **2:00 pm**, on **13 June 2014**.

The closing time of **2:00 pm** is defined as **2:00 pm** Australian Eastern Standard Time, or **2:00 pm** Australian Eastern Daylight Time, as determined by Telstra's Recorded Time Service (phone 1194).

AHPRA may in its absolute discretion extend the closing time by providing written notice to tenderers.

One electronic copy of the entire proposal must be submitted. If the tender proposal is too large to be transmitted via e-mail, it can be copied onto a USB drive and hand delivered to the relevant AHPRA office. Please contact the

Contact Officer for this tender (see section 12.1 for details) well in advance of the closing date to make the necessary arrangements for hand delivery.

Other than as set out in this document, late, facsimiled, or incomplete proposals will not be accepted.

Unless exceptional circumstances apply as described below, tenders received after the time allowed for the delivery of tenders are deemed ineligible for consideration.

Late tenders will only be opened to identify a business name and address.

The Contact Officer will promptly inform a tenderer that their tender was late and could not be considered.

Acceptance of late tenders only in exceptional circumstances

A late tender may only be accepted at the sole discretion of AHPRA, if it can be clearly demonstrated that AHPRA's receiving arrangements were at fault, i.e. delivery to the designated e-mail address was hindered in some manner including a major/critical incident, and that the integrity of the tender process will not be compromised by accepting a late tender.

Proposals delivered by the tenderers or their representative (including couriers) must be lodged as outlined above before the specified closing time. If a USB drive is being hand delivered, sufficient delivery time should also be allowed to account for building management security arrangements.

AHPRA staff cannot accept responsibility for lodging tenders on behalf of tenderers.

Proposals must be signed and dated by an authorised officer of the tenderer.

All proposals must be in the English language.

Proposals will be opened after 2:30pm on the closing date of tenders and notification of receipt will be forwarded to each tenderer.

3. Requests for further information

Clarification of processes

Prospective tenderers may telephone Bronwyn Benn, Property and Procurement Manager on +61 03 8708 9198 or bronwyn.benn@ahpra.gov.au to clarify matters relating to the tender process. Verbal explanations or instructions given to prospective tenderers prior to the acceptance of the proposal shall not bind AHPRA.

Clarification of tender specification or additional information

Requests for clarification of tender specifications or additional information, marked "confidential", must be made in writing via email.

Address such requests to nmbafeedback@ahpra.gov.au marked to the attention of Jocelyn Small, Program Manager, Nursing and Midwifery.

All requests for clarification or for additional information must be lodged by the nominated date (refer Key Dates Table) to allow sufficient time for response and information to be provided to all parties requesting tender documentation. The response of AHPRA to requests for clarification or additional information is entirely at the discretion of AHPRA and AHPRA reserves the right not to respond to any question or request, irrespective of when such question or request is received. In any event, AHPRA will not provide information later than three days before close of tender.

Except where AHPRA is of the opinion that issues raised apply only to an individual tenderer, answers provided by AHPRA to tenderer requests for clarification or additional information will be made available (without identifying the source of the inquiry) to all parties who have requested tender documentation.

Additional information required by AHPRA

If additional information to that contained in a proposal is required by AHPRA when proposals are being considered, written information and/or interviews may be requested to obtain such additional information at no cost to AHPRA.

The name and telephone number of an officer or employee of the tenderer capable of clarifying technical and commercial aspects of the proposal must be provided.

AHPRA may invite some or all tenderers to give a presentation to AHPRA in relation to their tenders, including (where the RFT relates in whole or in part to goods) demonstration of the goods. AHPRA is under no obligation to invite any presentations from tenderers.

In addition to presentations, AHPRA may request some or all tenderers to:

- conduct a site visit
- provide references, and/or
- make themselves available for panel interviews.

References

In their tender response tenderers must nominate and provide contact details of at least two referees whose organisations have been supplied with services similar to those requested in this document, and of whom AHPRA staff considering proposals may make inquiries to assist in establishing the suitability of any item or service tendered.

Negotiations and best and final offers

AHPRA is under no obligation to conduct any negotiations with tenderers.

After short listing, AHPRA may elect to engage in detailed discussions and negotiations with one or more tenderers, with a view to maximising the benefits of the tenders submitted.

As part of this negotiation process, AHPRA may request such a tenderer to improve one or more aspects of their tender, including any technical, financial, corporate or legal components.

Tenderers or, where the tendering process involves a short listing process, shortlisted tenderers, may be invited by AHPRA to submit a best and final offer in relation to all or certain aspects of their respective tenders.

AHPRA is under no obligation to give a tenderer the opportunity to submit a best and final offer. If AHPRA chooses to give a tenderer the opportunity to submit a best and final offer, it is under no obligation to give notification before the closing time that such opportunity will be given.

Notwithstanding the possibility that AHPRA may give a tenderer the opportunity to submit a best and final offer, a tenderer should be aware that AHPRA will, in conducting its evaluation of tenders, rely on all information (including all representations) contained in such tenders. Tenderers are therefore encouraged to submit their best and final offers in the first instance.

4. Reservations

Withdrawal from process

AHPRA reserves the right to withdraw from the tender process described in this document for whatever reason, prior to the signing of any agreement with any party for the delivery of goods or services described in this document.

Lowest cost proposal

The lowest cost proposal, or any proposal, will not necessarily be accepted.

Negotiation

AHPRA may, in its absolute discretion, decide not to enter into pre-contractual or any negotiations with any tenderer.

A tenderer is bound by its tender (including the Statement of Compliance to the Proposed Agreement forming part of the tenderer's submission) and, if selected as a successful tenderer, must, if requested by AHPRA, enter into a contract on the basis of the tender without negotiation.

AHPRA is under no obligation to appoint a successful tenderer or tenderers (as the case may be), or to enter into a contract with a successful tenderer or any other person, if it is unable to identify a tender that complies in all relevant respects with the requirements of AHPRA, or if to do so would otherwise not be in the best interests of AHPRA or the National Boards. For the avoidance of any doubt, in these circumstances AHPRA will be free to proceed via any alternative process.

AHPRA may conduct a debriefing session for all tenderers (successful and unsuccessful). Attendance at this debriefing session is optional.

Part offers

AHPRA reserves the right to accept tenders in relation to some and not all of the scope of activity described, or appoint one, more than one or no organisation on the basis of the tenders received.

AHPRA's rights

Notwithstanding anything else in this document, and without limiting its rights at law or otherwise, AHPRA reserves the right, in its absolute discretion at any time, to:

- cease to proceed with, or suspend the tendering process

- alter the structure and/or the timing of the RFT or the tendering process
- vary or extend any time or date specified in this RFT for all or any tenderers or other persons
- terminate the participation of any tenderer or any other person in the tendering process
- require additional information or clarification from any tenderer or any other person or provide additional information or clarification
- negotiate with any one or more tenderers and allow any tenderer to alter its tender
- reject any tender that does not comply with the requirements of this RFT, or
- consider and accept or reject any alternative proposals.

5. Conflicts of interest

Tenderers must declare to AHPRA any matter or issue which is may be perceived to be or may lead to, a conflict of interest regarding their proposal or participation in supply of the services described. Tenderers must outline a strategy so that any actual conflict of interest will be avoided.

6. Confidentiality and intellectual property

All proposals and any accompanying documents become the property of AHPRA.

Ownership of all information, reports or data provided by AHPRA to tenderers resides with AHPRA. The tenderer shall not, without written approval of the Chief Executive Officer of AHPRA, use the information or reports other than in the development of the proposal or the performance of the assignment. Such information, in whatever form provided by AHPRA or converted by the tenderer, must be destroyed in a secure fashion following advice of the outcome of the tender or at completion of the assignment.

7. Probity procedures

Notification of probity breach required

Should any tenderer consider that the tender process under this document has failed to accord it fair right to be considered as a successful tenderer or that it has been prejudiced by any breach of these Conditions of Tender or other relevant principle affecting the tenders or their evaluation, the tenderer must provide immediate notice of the alleged failure or breach to the Contact Person. Notification must set out the issues in dispute, the impact upon the tenderer's interests, any relevant background information and the outcome desired.

Timeliness of notification

Delay in notification of a probity breach, or notification after the announcement of the successful tender will preclude a tenderer from relying upon or taking action based upon such breach.

Resolution of disputes

Dispute over the notification of breach will be resolved according to the Dispute Resolution section and clauses in AHPRA's standard agreement.

8. Disclosure

Presumption to full disclosure

AHPRA has a strong presumption in favour of disclosing contracts and, in determining whether any clauses should be confidential, specific Freedom of Information (FOI) principles (including a public interest test) will apply.

Disclosure of tender and contract details

Subject to this clause and the Conditions of Contract, all documents provided by the tenderer during the tender process will be held in confidence so far as the law permits. Notwithstanding any copyright or other intellectual property right that may subsist in the tender documents, the tenderer, by submitting the tender, licenses AHPRA to reproduce the whole or any portion of the tender documents for the purposes of tender evaluation.

In submitting its tender the tenderer accepts that AHPRA may publish (on the internet or otherwise) information including the name of the successful or recommended tenderer, the value of the successful tender and the Contractor's name together with the provisions of the contract generally.

Non-disclosure of contract provisions

Non-disclosure of contract provisions must be justified under the principles for exemption of the *Freedom of Information Act*, providing that information acquired by an agency or a Minister from a business, commercial or financial undertaking is exempt under the Act if the information relates to 'trade secrets' or other matters of a business, commercial or financial nature and the disclosure would be likely to expose the undertaking

unreasonably to disadvantage. AHPRA will consider these arguments in the tender evaluation and negotiations with tenderers.

9. Lobbying

Any tenderer who attempts to exert influence on the outcome of the tender process by lobbying, directly or indirectly, AHPRA staff, AHPRA Managers, Board Members, Agency Management Committee members or Members of Parliament, will be disqualified from the tender process.

A tenderer who offers AHPRA staff or other persons engaged in the tender process by AHPRA anything that, in the opinion of AHPRA, could undermine the impartiality of the tender process, and/or could create an actual or a perceived conflict of interest (including but not limited to offers of gifts, hospitality, and favours), will be disqualified from the tender process.

10. Dumping of goods

Tender bids from suppliers who are offering goods subject to an Australian Customs Dumping Notice will be disqualified from further consideration.

AHPRA reserves the right to suspend an agreement where the supplier is providing goods subject to an Australian Customs Dumping Notice.

11. Pricing

Tenders must contain a detailed cost summary as well as relevant stage and total project costing. If relevant, the tender must state the price for each unit of output.

All prices shall be fixed for at least 90 days from the date of submission of tenders. Tenderers must confirm the period of price validity in their tender.

Price variations over the period of the contract must be advised. Tenderers must state the factor and reasons for any variation.

All prices quoted must be represented in Australian dollars.

12. Payments

Tenderers must indicate whether they have the capacity to accept electronic funds transfer as a facility for contract payments.

A payment schedule will be negotiated with the successful tenderer. AHPRA's preferred position is to make payments according to delivery of outputs or satisfactory achievement of key project stages.

13. Alternative proposals

Tenderers may submit more than one offer. Each such offer must be made as separate tender documentation and clearly marked Alternative Proposal.

Tenders which do not comply with the requirements of these Conditions of Tender may be considered at AHPRA's sole discretion.

14. Anti-competitive conduct

Tenderers and their respective officers, employees, agents and advisers must not engage in any collusion, anti-competitive conduct or any other similar conduct with any other tenderer or any other person in relation to the preparation, content or lodgement of their tender. In addition to any other remedies available to it under law or contract, AHPRA may, in its absolute discretion, immediately disqualify a tenderer that it believes has engaged in such collusive or anti-competitive conduct.

15. Tenderer warranties

By submitting a tender, a tenderer warrants that:

- in lodging its tender it did not rely on any express or implied statement, warranty or representation, whether oral, written, or otherwise made by or on behalf of AHPRA, its officers, employees, agents or advisers other than any statement, warranty or representation expressly contained in the RFT
- it did not use the improper assistance of AHPRA employees or information unlawfully obtained from AHPRA in compiling its tender

- it has examined this RFT, and any other documents referenced or referred to herein, and any other information made available in writing by AHPRA to tenderers for the purposes of submitting a tender
- it has sought and examined all necessary information which is obtainable by making reasonable enquiries relevant to the risks and other circumstances affecting its tender
- it has otherwise obtained all information and advice necessary for the preparation of its tender
- it is responsible for all costs and expenses related to the preparation and lodgement of its tender, any subsequent negotiation, and any future process connected with or relating to the tendering process
- it otherwise accepts and will comply with the rules set out in this Part C of the RFT, and
- it will provide additional information in a timely manner as requested by AHPRA to clarify any matters contained in the tender.

16. General conditions of response

This must be signed by an authorised officer of the tenderer.

Part D – Tender response schedule

1. Tenderer details

Tenderers are to complete Parts 1 to 5 of the tender response.

Tendering Organisation

Full legal name	
Trading name	
Entity status (e.g.: Partnership, Company etc)	
ACN number	
Registration for GST	(Yes or No)
Australian Business Number (ABN)	
Place of incorporation	
Postal address	
Principal office	
Contact person	
Position/Title	
Telephone no	
Mobile no	
Facsimile no	
E-mail address	

Sub-contractor #1

Name	
Address	
Tasks/aspects/scope of project to be undertaken	

Sub-contractor #2

Name	
Address	
Tasks/aspects/scope of project to be undertaken	

[Repeat as required]

Profile of tenderer / experience

Range of services currently delivered	
Years of operation in this capacity	

Financial capability

<p>Tenderers are required to demonstrate that they have the financial capacity to provide, over the term of the contract, all the requirements specified in this RFT. Accordingly, please provide the following information. If the answer to any of the following questions is yes, provide an explanation.</p> <p>Note that AHPRA undertakes to treat any information provided as confidential.</p>	
(a) Are there any significant events, matters or circumstances which have arisen since the end of the last financial year which may significantly affect the operations of the tenderer?	
(b) Are there any mergers/acquisitions either recent (within the past 12 months) or which are imminent?	
(c) Are there any proceedings, either actual or threatened, against the tenderer, its parent or associated entities or any director of the tenderer, its parent or associated entities or have there been any such proceedings within the past five years? If so, what (if any) remedial action has been taken in respect of such proceedings?	
(d) Are there any bankruptcy actions against a director of the tenderer, its parent or associated entities, or has there been within the past five years?	
(e) Are there any de-registration actions against the tenderer, its parent or associated entities on foot, or have there been any within the past five years?	
(f) Are there any insolvency proceedings, actual or threatened (including voluntary administration, application to wind up, or other like action) against the tenderer, its parent or associated entities on foot, or have there been any within the past five years?	
(g) Is the tenderer, its parent or associated entities currently in default of any agreement, contract, order or award that would or would be likely to adversely affect the financial capacity of the tenderer to provide the goods or services contemplated by this RFT?	
(h) Are there any other factors which could adversely impact on the financial ability of the tenderer to successfully perform the obligations contemplated by this RFT?	
(i) Is the tenderer solvent and able to meet its debts as and when they fall due in the normal course of business?	
<p>In addition to the information required above, tenderers are required to undertake to provide to AHPRA (or its nominated agent) upon request all such information as AHPRA reasonably requires to satisfy itself that tenderers are financially viable and have the financial capacity to provide the goods or services for which they are tendering and to otherwise meet their obligations under the Proposed Contract.</p>	
Provide your undertaking to comply with this request.	
Will you provide valid tax invoices?	(Yes or No)

Insurances

Proof of insurance cover:	Provider	Policy Number	Expiry Date	Limit of Liability
• Public liability				
• Professional indemnity				
• Others as relevant				
• Relevant exclusions:	(Provide separately summary of any <i>relevant</i> exclusions to the above, and their potential impact on this contract)			

Technical capability

Summary of entity's achievements	
Technical capability	
Quality Accreditation Standard	

Qualifications and experience of key project staff [Repeat table as required]

Name	
Title/Office held	
Qualifications	
Previous experience	
Role/functions to be performed	

2. References

Referee #1

Company name	
Postal address	
Contact person	
Position/title	
Telephone no	
Email address	
Nature of work performed	

Referee #2

Company name	
Postal address	
Street address	
Contact person	
Position/Title	
Telephone no	
Facsimile no	
Nature of work performed	

3. Evaluation criteria

Evaluation criteria – Overview (For tenderer's information only)

Delete the following prior to submission of your tender response

Tenderers are to provide their proposal in relation to the evaluation criteria by completing 'Response to Evaluation Criteria' below.

In completing your response to the evaluation criteria documented in Part B: 'Specification', tenderers should **consider** the following aspects in their response, as relevant, by addressing or providing the following:

- how the project/service will be implemented, managed and monitored (demonstrating your understanding of the project and its structure). Note: The extent to which a practical, workable and sector sensitive approach is developed is a key consideration
- an understanding of the nature of each deliverable and how you intend to provide the components of each deliverable
- a detailed and considered discussion of the proposed methodology and how it addresses the key needs of the tender as described in the tender specification
- sufficient information to demonstrate adequate financial, technical and other resources capability to successfully undertake the requirement.
- any relevant supporting documents
- extent of any relevant experience
- broad approach to the project
- components, sub components and major tasks
- timetable indicating sequence and duration of each task, prepared in accordance with the key dates nominated in this document
- key project review points
- deliverables and outcomes for each phase of the project
- how any standards specified in this tender specification will be satisfied
- tenderer inputs
- AHPRA resource/input required
- other stakeholder input or partnering relationships required and how they will be established and managed
- how the service will integrate with and/or complement services provided by the tenderer or other agencies, suppliers or providers
- data collection and analysis arrangements
- staff management and development.

Response to evaluation criteria

Your response against the Evaluation Criteria must be included below.

Note: Tenderers may rely on the information they have already provided in the previous tables in relation to any criterion if the tenderer regards such information as satisfactorily addressing the relevant criterion. If this is done, it should be noted against the relevant criterion.

Criterion #	Criterion name	Descriptor	Expected bidder's response	Criterion weighted value
1	Understanding the Midwife competency standards in the context of the health professional regulatory system	Detailed knowledge and understanding of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the existing competency standards in relation to the purpose of the standards in the registration process of midwives • the National Board's approach to standards for performance in the context of the National Regulation and Accreditation Scheme 	Bidder must demonstrate a strong understanding of the national accreditation and regulation scheme and where the standards for practice intersect with current midwifery practice.	Vital (3)
Your response to this criterion:				
2.	Qualifications and experience of staff	Appropriate and relevant capability (credentials and experience of at least 5 years) in research design and implementation to ensure scientific principles are applied to standards development. Factors include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • demonstration of contemporary knowledge and understanding of recent developments in midwifery practice and education • research experience that entails literature reviews, focus groups in diverse settings, obtaining ethics approvals and critical analysis and reporting on findings 	Bidder must demonstrate experience in similar research work that has been delivered successfully, including the ability to reflect research findings into an easily accessible report with recommendations and sets of standards	Vital (3)
Your response to this criterion:				

3.	Research methodology	The ability to clearly document and articulate the research methodology to be used and the rationale for the selection.	The bidder's approach described must be valid, innovative and effective to ensure delivery of project outcomes and deliverables as specified.	Highly important (2)
Your response to this criterion:				
4.	Proposed research organisation	Satisfactory financial, technical support and project management capability to fulfil the specifications of the project as reflected in a submitted workplan with achievable milestones /project outcomes and a proposed budget with fees payable schedule.	The bidder is available to fulfil the requirements of the tender specification at the times specific and within the designated budget proposed.	Highly important (2)
Your response to this criterion:				
5.	Communication and stakeholder engagement	Demonstrated experience and excellent track record of successfully engaging, motivating and communicating with a diverse range of stakeholders	Bidder must be able to provide evidence of stakeholder engagement and a proposed draft high level communications plan	Vital (3)
Your response to this criterion:				

Price/Cost of proposal

To enable the viability of pricing to be evaluated, tenders must include an itemised budget with costings for each stage of the contract. All prices must be in Australian dollars.

All prices shall be fixed for at least 90 days from the date of submission of tenders. Tenderers must confirm the period of price validity in their tender. If price varies over the period of the contract, indicate the factor and reasons for the variation.

All prices must be **GST inclusive** (where applicable).

Price validity	
Prices remain valid from the date of submission of tender until:	

Price variation (State following or any other mechanism if relevant)			
Degree (%)	From (date)	Rationale	
Item	Cost (\$)		
Research			
Establishment costs (itemise components)			
Project Manager	Rate \$	Days/Hours	
Project Staff #1	Rate \$	Days/Hours	
Administration costs			
Management costs			
Infrastructure costs			
Equipment costs			
Other			
Subtotal: Total cost for research			
Observations			
Establishment costs (itemise components)			
Project Manager	Project Manager	Project Manager	
Project Staff #1	Project Staff #1	Project Staff #1	
Administration costs			
Management costs			
Infrastructure costs			
Equipment costs			
Other			
Subtotal: Total cost for observation			
Consultation and validation			
Establishment Costs (itemise components)			
Project Manager	Rate \$	Days/Hours	
Project Staff #1	Rate \$	Days/Hours	
Administration costs			
Management costs			
Infrastructure costs			
Equipment costs			
Other			
Subtotal: Total charge for consultation and validation			
Total charge (GST inclusive)			\$

4. Disclosure of contract information

The Conditions of Tender include provision for disclosure of contract information. If you wish to withhold the disclosure of specific contract information, you must detail how the release of this information will expose trade secrets or expose the business unreasonably to disadvantage. AHPRA will consider these arguments in the tender evaluation and negotiations with tenderers.

Non-disclosure of contract provisions must be justified under the principles for exemption within the Freedom of Information legislation applying in the particular State or Territory, providing that information acquired by an agency or a Minister from a business, commercial or financial undertaking is exempt under the Act if the information relates to trade secrets or other matters of a business, commercial or financial nature and the disclosure would be likely to expose the undertaking unreasonably to disadvantage.

Trade secrets

In considering whether specific information should be categorised as a trade secret, submitters should assess:

- The extent to which it is known outside of your business
- The extent to which it is known by the persons engaged in your business
- Any measures taken to guard its secrecy
- Its value to your business and to any competitors
- The amount of money and effort invested in developing the information
- The ease or difficulty with which others may acquire or develop this information

Trade secrets not to be disclosed:

Unreasonable disadvantage

In determining whether disclosure of specific information will expose your business unreasonably to disadvantage, you should consider the relevant sections of the FOI Act. Broadly, you should consider whether:

- The information is generally available to competitors
- It could be disclosed without causing substantial harm to the competitive position of the business

Unreasonable disadvantage disclosure would cause

5. Acceptance of terms and conditions

An authorised officer of the tenderer must signify acceptance of the terms and conditions under which the tender is advertised, including the warranties given by the tenderer in section headed “Tenderer Warranties” of Part C, Conditions of Tender.

Signature as indicated in this part, and submission of a proposal in response to the Request For Tender, signifies acceptance of all terms and conditions unless specifically indicated in this section by the tenderer.

Tenderers must indicate their understanding and acceptance of each part of this tender document, including the attached AHPRA standard form of agreement, by signing or initialling in the table below. Where any part of this tender is not understood or accepted, tenderers must attach a tabulated Statement of Departures with explanation of why that part is not accepted.

Acceptance of Conditions		
Part	Acceptance (initial)	Non-acceptance (initial, and attach tabulated Statement of Departures)
Part A: General information for tenderers		
Part B: Tender specifications		
Part C: Conditions of tender		
Part D: Tender response schedules		
Attachment 1: Standard AHPRA Agreement		

Endorsement	
Signature of authorised officer for tenderer	
Name of authorised officer	
Title/Office held	
Date	