

Call for Tender n° 01/2026

Communication Support Activities

1. Brief Description of the EPOS Research Infrastructure

EPOS (European Plate Observing System, www.epos-eu.org/) is the pan-European research infrastructure dedicated to integrating data, services and facilities of the solid Earth science research communities in Europe. Its mission is to ensure the sustainable use and re-use of multidisciplinary solid Earth science data and products, fostering state-of-the-art research and innovation. EPOS is committed to establishing and underpinning sustainable and long-term access to solid Earth science data and services, integrating diverse European research infrastructures under a common federated framework. EPOS ERIC is the legal entity established by the European Commission to coordinate and integrate national and international research infrastructures, forming the EPOS Delivery Framework. Based in Rome, Italy, EPOS ERIC comprises 18 Members: Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Denmark, France, Greece, Iceland, Italy, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, and 1 Observer: Germany. The governing body of EPOS ERIC is the General Assembly.

Our activity, like our infrastructure, is constantly evolving. The emergence of new needs allows us to update continuously, grow professionally, and learn new skills. At EPOS, you will find a challenging and varied job and join a large and diverse network of people from Europe and beyond.

EPOS cares about inclusiveness!

Diversity is an invaluable asset to EPOS. Fostering a diverse, equitable, and inclusive workplace is our priority, and this also applies to the way in which we select our suppliers. We wholeheartedly encourage applications from individuals representing diverse ethnicities, cultural and religious backgrounds, genders, sexual orientations, and career stages for all our collaboration opportunities.

2. Purpose of the tender

The purpose of this Call for Tender is to select a consultant or company specialising in communication services, to support EPOS' communication unit in i) the scientific organisation of the EPOS Summer School and in ii) web writing activities in the context of the migration to the new EPOS institutional website, as described in point 4 below. It includes a description of the required services and instructions for participating in the tender process.

The procurement process shall fully comply with the principles of transparency, adequate publicity, non-discrimination, equal treatment, mutual recognition, and proportionality, as set out in the [EPOS ERIC Procurement Rules](#).

3. Award of contract

The fixed price for this tender is EUR 25.000,00 (twenty-five thousand). The contract will be awarded to the offer providing the best value for money. This will be determined by combining the price and the quality of the offer, with the final score calculated in accordance with the formula detailed under point 10. After evaluating the quality of the offers, the tenderers will be ranked using the formula detailed under point 10 to determine the best offer. EPOS ERIC benefits from VAT exemption. Prices must be quoted in euros and will not be subject to revision.

Costs incurred in preparing and submitting offers are borne by the tenderers and cannot be reimbursed. The tenderer will submit the offer and carry out all necessary activities related to the tender process, including supporting any due diligence requirements, entirely at their own cost. EPOS ERIC will not be liable for any bid costs, expenditures, work, or effort incurred by a tenderer in proceeding with or participating in this procurement, including if the procurement process is terminated without awarding any contracts.

4. Description of the services

The selected consultant will closely perform the activities in the following key areas:

1. Support to the scientific organisation of the EPOS Summer School (June 28-July 4, 2026):

The consultant will provide scientific secretariat and communication support for the EPOS Summer School 2026, scheduled for the week of June 28-July 4, 2026, by:

- organising the program committee meetings (e.g. scheduling meetings, drafting reports, defining the event agenda);
- analysing and searching for possible stakeholders and participants to be involved;
- promoting the school through a multi-channel communication campaign to be implemented;
- the setup of a mechanism for the creation and release of microcredentials, such as the European Digital Credentials for Learning (EDCs), for the certification of the competences acquired by the school participants.

2. Website Text Editing and Proofreading:

The consultant will provide editorial support for the migration and adaptation of content from the current EPOS website to the new one currently being developed, with the objective of optimising the content for the web, improving, on one hand, content readability, usability and appeal for human users and on the other the findability of information by machines (search engines and AI agents). This activity will include in particular:

- Drafting contents based on information from the EPOS Communication Unit and other relevant partners.
- Reviewing and updating existing website content to enhance its clarity, usability, and appeal for web users. This will involve adapting the content for the online medium and ensuring consistency with EPOS's overall communication strategy.

Deliverables:

The consultant will be expected to deliver the following:

- Monthly report on the activities performed;
- Report on the activities, outcomes and lessons learned from the summer school;
- Microcredentials system in place and credentials delivered to school participants;
- Edited and proofread website content, ready for implementation.

5. Duration of the contract or time limit for completion

The required services will be provided over eight months, starting in March 2026.



6. Minimum eligibility criteria for applicants

Participation in this tendering procedure is open on equal terms to companies or professional communication consultants holding a VAT number and registered for an activity code aligned with the subject of this tender and meeting the eligibility criteria below. No subcontracting of any element of the services outlined in this call for tenders is permitted. Non-compliance with this requirement will result in exclusion from the tender evaluation process.

a. Technical and professional criteria

1. Applicants must have excellent knowledge in understanding, speaking and writing of the English language;
2. Have demonstrated experience as a senior communicator (5+ years)
3. Having conducted at least three similar projects;
4. Being able to provide at least three references from three different clients who have acquired similar services in the past.

7. Exclusion criteria and evidence

Contracts may not be awarded to tenderers who, during the procurement procedure:

- a) Are subject to a conflict of interest; the verification of conflicting situations giving grounds for exclusion concerns tenderers, but also any person of the tenderer with powers of representation, decision-making or control in relation to the tenderer. A conflict of interest exists where the impartial and objective exercise of functions – in the present case, the impartial and objective implementation of the contract – is compromised for reasons involving family, emotional life, political or national affinity, economic interest or any other shared interest.

As a result, the tenderer that is found to be in conflict of interest shall be excluded. The tenderers shall note that having found the tenderer in conflict of interest will lead to the rejection of the whole offer.

- b) Have misrepresented the information required by EPOS ERIC as a condition of participation in the contract procedure or fail to supply this information;
- c) Find themselves in one of the situations of exclusion for this procurement procedure, in particular, assigning or subcontracting any part of the work to third parties, in violation of the requirements detailed in point 6. The tenderers shall certify that they are not in one of the situations listed above by completing and signing the 'Declaration of Honour' (Annexe 1).

8. Participation in the tendering procedure

The language of the submitted tenders shall be English. Offers should be dispatched no later than 10/03/2026 by using the following means of submission:

Means of submission	Time limit	Evidence of dispatch	Address for delivery
Post	17:00 CET	Postmark	EPOS ERIC c/o INGV - Via di Vigna Murata 605 00143 Rome - ITALY
Courier	17:00 CET	Deposit slip of courier service	



Offers must be submitted using the double-envelope system – i.e., one outer envelope and two inner envelopes – to ensure the confidentiality and integrity of the data. The outer envelope should indicate the number of the procurement procedure and be marked as follows: “Call for Tender – Communication Support Activities”. If self-adhesive envelopes are used, they must be sealed with adhesive tape, and the sender must sign across the tape.

The two inner envelopes shall be labelled as:

- A. Administrative and Technical Offer
- B. Economic Offer.

The envelope A. “Administrative and Technical Offer” shall contain:

- The Declaration of Honour duly signed (Annexe 1)
- The completed Submission Form duly signed (Annexe 2);
- Curriculum Vitae of the proponent in case of a professional or, in case of a company, the curriculum vitae of the primary executor of the project and up to 2 collaborators who will participate in the activities. CVs should be in the Europass Format and include information on work experience, qualifications and language ability.
- A portfolio with at least three similar projects conducted, with the three references enclosed.

The envelope B. “Economic Offer” shall contain:

- The offered price quoted in Euro should be provided on the tenderer’s headed notepaper.

The Offer must be:

- Signed and dated by the tenderer (i.e. the Declaration of Honour, the Submission Form, the CV, the economic offer);
- Perfectly legible so that there can be no doubt as to words and figures.

The period of validity of the tender, during which tenderers may not modify the terms of their offers in any respect, is 3 months from the date indicated in point 11.

9. Accuracy of proposal

The offer must be clear, concise and complete. Tenderers are advised to check the accuracy of their submission before returning it, paying particular attention to clerical errors and omissions. Tenderers will not be permitted to amend proposals after the proposal return date, except as part of any proposal clarification process initiated by EPOS ERIC. EPOS ERIC reserves the right to mark a tenderer down or exclude them from the procurement if their tender contains any ambiguities, caveats or lacks clarity. Tenderers should submit only the information necessary to respond effectively to this call. Offers will be evaluated based solely on the information submitted in their tenders, before the tender submission deadline.

10. Tender evaluation

EPOS ERIC may, in its discretion, extend the closing date and time of the tender. The selection procedure will be based on the principles of equal treatment, fairness and transparency. An evaluation team will be established, and the EPOS ERIC Executive Director will oversee and approve the process. Offers fulfilling the minimum criteria will be evaluated against the following award criteria:



Awarding Criteria

Offers will be evaluated based on a combination of technical and economic criteria, with the contract awarded to the bidder demonstrating the best value for money. The following table outlines the evaluation criteria and the number of points awarded for each.

Awarding Criteria		Points
Technical Criteria 70/100	1) Evaluation of the CV(s) and experience of the Tenderer	30
	2) Experience with the activities to be performed	30
	3) Congruence of the previous services listed with the EPOS framework and the requested services	10
Economic Criteria 30/100	4) Economic Offer (Opening bid/maximum budget of € 25,000.00)	20
Total		100

In offering and delivering the services, the tenderer shall ensure the highest quality standards on which EPOS ERIC will be the sole judge.

The best value-for-money offer will be selected to meet the criteria stated in point 5, based on the scores from the technical and qualitative evaluations.

All applicants will receive acknowledgement of receipt of their tender and will be informed of the outcomes of the selection process by e-mail within two weeks of the conclusion of the evaluation procedure. Tenderers should provide a valid e-mail address and contact details in the tender and check this e-mail address regularly.

EPOS ERIC is not obliged to provide reasons for its decision to shortlist, accept or reject any tender. Preference will be given to companies specialised in different areas of science communication, including institutional communication and marketing.

EPOS ERIC reserves the right to conclude or not the tender process and select the successful tenderer.

EPOS ERIC will not be contractually bound in any way to a bidder for this tender until EPOS ERIC and the successful winner have entered into a written contract.

The following offers will be excluded from the tendering procedure:

- those received after the deadline;
- those missing information about the economic operator or lacking the requested requirements;
- those submitted by economic operators whose position is inconsistent with the law or the procedure;
- those submitted by economic operators who are subject to one of the exclusion criteria at point 6;
- those submitted by economic operators who are subject to one of the causes of exclusion according to the Italian law.



11. Confidentiality and conflict of interest

The tenderers undertake that they will not, at any time, either before or after the termination of the service contract, use, disclose or communicate to any third parties any confidential information relating to EPOS ERIC. This restriction shall continue to apply after the termination of the contract without limit in point of time. To ensure the independence of the terms of the contract, the winning tenderer will sign a declaration certifying that it has no conflict of interest in relation to the tasks to be undertaken and that it will inform EPOS ERIC should this status change.

12. Terms and conditions

This invitation to tender is not binding on EPOS ERIC. EPOS ERIC's contractual obligation commences only upon the signature of the contract with the successful tenderer.

EPOS ERIC may cancel the award procedure up to the point of signature without the tenderers being entitled to claim any compensation. Any such decision must be substantiated and the tenderers notified. Similarly, EPOS ERIC reserves the right to reject any and all proposals, to advertise for new proposals, to abandon the need for services, or to amend this Call for Tender at any time prior to the execution of the written contract. EPOS ERIC reserves the right to waive any formalities in the call for tender process.

EPOS ERIC shall not be liable for any compensation with respect to tenderers whose offers have not been accepted. Nor shall it be liable if it decides not to award the contract.

By submitting an offer, the Tenderer accepts all the terms and conditions set out in this Call for Tender. The Tenderer agrees that:

- EPOS ERIC may copy the proposal for the purpose of facilitating the evaluation of the proposal and agrees that such copying will not violate the rights of any third party.
- It will not bring any claim or have any cause of action against EPOS ERIC based on any misunderstanding concerning the information provided or EPOS ERIC's failure, neglect or otherwise to provide the bidder with pertinent information as intended by this Call for Tender.

The agreement for the provision of services will be completed by signing a contract between the two Parties. It will include the terms and conditions for the provision of services, the terms of delivery, and the invoicing and payment modalities.

13. Privacy Statement

Once EPOS ERIC has received and opened the tender, it becomes its property and shall be treated confidentially. The personal data (such as names, addresses and CVs) included in the tender documentation will be processed in compliance with EU Regulation 679/2016 on the protection of personal data (GDPR). Tenderers can contact EPOS ERIC at any time by email at epos-eric@pec.it to exercise their rights as provided in the GDPR, in CHAPTER III (access, rectification, cancellation, restriction, objection, portability), and to lodge a complaint with a supervisory authority in case of infringement of the regulation. For more information about our privacy practice, please read our EPOS Privacy Statement on the EPOS website at <https://www.epos-eu.org/epos-eric-privacy-policy>.

Unless otherwise indicated, replies to the questions and any personal data requested are required to evaluate the tender in accordance with the specifications of the invitation to tender and will be processed solely for that purpose by EPOS ERIC.

14. Contact Persons

Information and any questions regarding the tender should be submitted to the following:

EPOS ERIC Executive Director	Carmela Freda (executive.director@epos-eric.eu)
EPOS ERIC Chief of Administration	Diana Piras (diana.piras@epos-eric.eu)

Questions shall be submitted in English to clarify the procurement documents and procedure. EPOS ERIC may respond to questions or provide information from tenderers, but is not required to provide such responses or information to all other tenderers.

15. Contracting organisation

EPOS ERIC
Via di Vigna Murata n° 605
00143 ROME (ITALY)
FISCAL CODE 96409510581
VAT NUMBER IT15152381008
www.epos-eu.org

