



HIGHLIGHTS



Newsletter No. 4

The fourth issue of the COMPLETE newsletter describes the procedures which have been developed by the COMPLETE project for facilitating procurement of innovation and R&D services in the public network operators' domain. Public network operators in Europe are clustered around the GEANT project, which groups a number of operators of research & education networks in Europe.

Dear Readers,

COMPLETE project is aimed at addressing the Pre-Commercial Procurement (PCP) and the Public Procurement of Innovation (PPI) in the area of optical networking technologies and infrastructures.

The new approach to public procurement means the introduction of a modern system, in which the essential elements are: innovation and sustainable society and environmental-friendly technology.

Your sincerely,

Bartosz Belter, the Project Coordinator

Introduction

The new approach to public procurements is the adoption of a modern system, in which the essential elements are innovation and sustainable society and the use of an environmental-friendly technologies.

Public procurements leverage the creation of “free markets” and the vision of the EU single market where trade barriers have been eliminated, due to the significant financial potential of the public expenditure, which in combination with the legal instruments may have a positive effect on the development of scientific research, the modernization of enterprises, the creating of new jobs and the environmental protection.

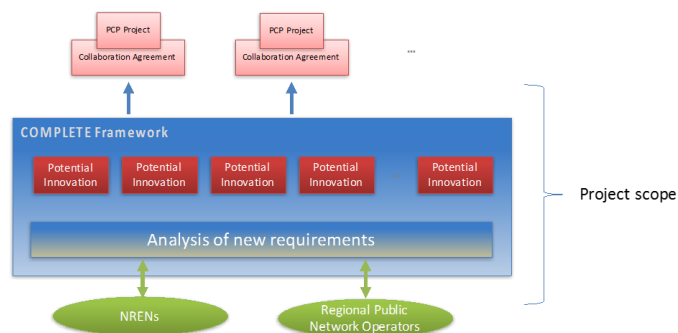
However, in public procurement processes there are also restrictions resulting mainly from high costs and a significant level of risk involved in innovative projects. Acquisition of innovative solutions through traditional public procurement also requires possessing knowledge on the proper description of the products or services that are not yet available on the market. Despite these obstacles, purchasers can increase their participation in the creation of a market for advanced goods, fostering the research and development investments and contributing to the growth and competitiveness of the economy.

Supporting innovative activities is now one of the key policies of the European Union and constitutes an integral element of the Europe 2020 Strategy, through which a number of initiatives which promote a new approach to public procurement in terms of innovation growth has been launched.

COMPLETE Framework

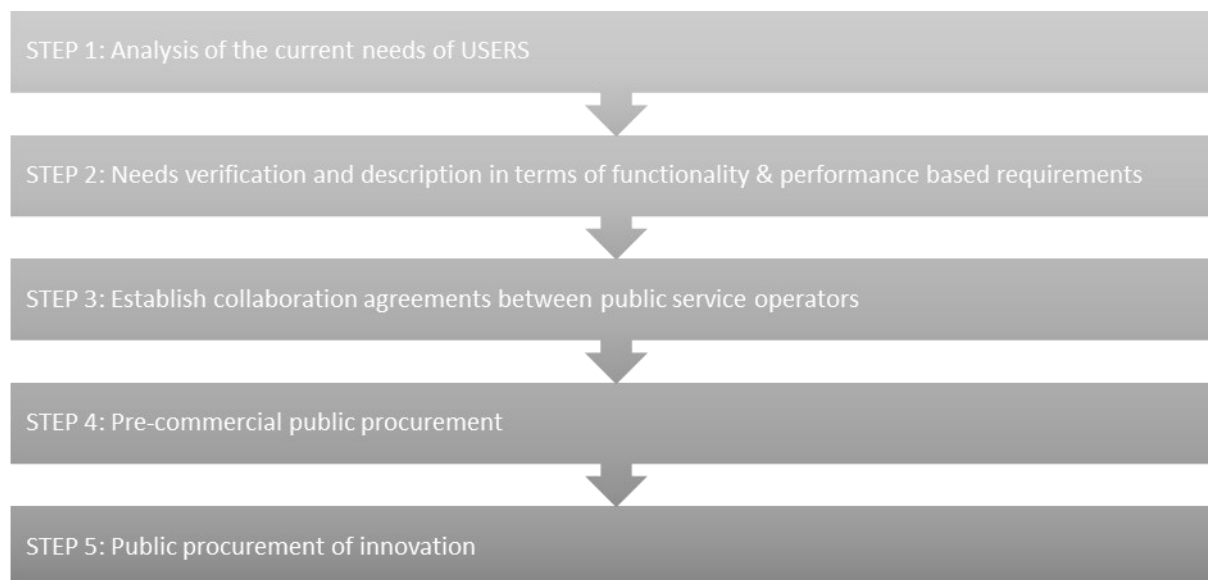
COMPLETE sets a collaborative environment where public network operators can work together and exchange knowledge about the current service offerings and their potential evolution to better serve user communities and customers.

COMPLETE offers a unique opportunity for NRENs and other regional public network operators to jointly analyse needs and new requirements exposed by the customers of these networks. The analysis of new requirements, complemented by a deep analysis of the structure of the market can result in defining potential innovations, which can become subjects of follow-up inter collaboration among interested partners.



COMMUNICATION PLATFORM FOR TENDERS OF NOVEL TRANSPORT NETWORKS

Procurement Procedures



The COMPLETE Framework is introduced to stimulate the adoption of PCP procedures in the community of public network operators in Europe. This framework defines the key building blocks to cluster specific activities which can be performed by the stakeholders to support the formulation and creation of potential PCP projects in the networking domain.

In order to implement procurement procedures in the community of public network operators, COMPLETE proposes the execution of the following steps

STEP 1: Analysis of the current needs of USERS

Analysing and identifying the needs of users of public services offered by infrastructure owners is essential for all follow-up activities. In the domain of public network operators, and specifically in the GEANT environment, customers of the services offered by network operators are

- Research institutes,
- Universities,
- Local governments,
- Research projects, and
- Research individuals.

STEP 2: Needs verification and description in terms of functionality & performance based requirements

The needs expressed by the users and the needs arising from the self-evaluation process, concluded as the outcome of the analysis stage, should be transformed into a set of functionalities and performance based requirements, which must be implemented in a network in order to satisfy the customers. For the purpose of validation, a proper description of the need / challenge is important in order to ensure sufficient interest and response from potentially interested suppliers. Firstly, the interested stakeholders must identify and predetermine the desired outcome and impact and cost saving factors for themselves: how new services will change the offering and if there is direct financial impact on the service operator. It is essential that public operators know whether the new features requested by their users have been already introduced to the market by some industrial players. An in depth analysis of the market determines the level of innovation of the corresponding products, as potential components of a pre-commercial procurement. Additionally, stakeholders should take into account the potential impact of a new R&D development on the European market.

STEP 3: Establish collaboration agreements between public service operators and their users

As soon as the new innovative services for potential development have been identified, formal collaboration arrangements should be established between the involved parties. The collaboration agreement should be signed between public network operators, as the owners of the underlying infrastructure and services, and a set of users, which played the pivotal role in the process of the identification of new functionality/services. The collaboration agreement should clearly describe the interests of the involved parties and their responsibility, e.g. for proof-of-concept implementation or testing.

STEP 4: Pre-commercial procurement

This step initiates the whole process of the pre-commercial procurement project. It consists of several phases, which are described below.

Notice of competition

The PCP starts with the open announcement about the competition (call for tender). The completed documentation shall inform potential suppliers about the conditions of the procedure, the stages of pre-commercial procurement, the criteria for assessing incoming proposals and conditions of accounting and financing of research and development. At this phase, one should also find IPR rules. All phases of the proceedings PCP should be described in detail, including information on the duration of each step, expected deliverables, milestones and results to be produced, preliminary review and evaluation of the offered solutions .

Signing a contract

After selecting suppliers and inviting them to participate in the pre-commercial proceedings, a contract between the purchaser and the supplier is signed. The agreement covers all phases of proceedings and contains clauses defining the rules of conduct in a situation where the supplier is not admitted to the next phase.

Research and prototyping

PCP is not about purely fundamental research, i.e. curiosity-driven research studying fundamental scientific phenomena for which there is no concrete application field in view yet. PCP is about applied R&D, i.e. application driven R&D to prove that workable solutions can be developed. PPI is then commercial deployment of such newly developed solutions. After signing the contract, the project enters the implementation phase. It is assumed that a minimum of four suppliers have been involved to guarantee fair competition whereby in each procedural step the number of operators is reduced by one so that at least two of them take part in all three stages. The full procedure under PCP usually takes two years or more, thus it is crucial at the stage of the project and risk management to properly study the progress of research and development and to produce adequate documentation of all results of the project so that the new person included in the project will receive the full knowledge of all existing activities.

STEP 5: Public procurement

The purchaser is preparing the terms of reference and all other tender documents on the basis of the results of the experimentation and the performance of the best technical solutions proposed by suppliers who have successfully fulfilled the third phase of the project. From that moment on ordering apply to all provisions of the Public Procurement Law. The tender is open to all participants. It is assumed that the phase of public procurement is executed by a new team than the one who oversaw the research and development, thus ensuring equal opportunities for all taking part in the tender in accordance with the provisions of the Act and the accepted rules of the European treaties.

PARTNERS

