

REQUEST FOR INFORMATION: COSTING PROPOSALS FOR SUPPLY, CONFIGURATION AND DEPLOYMENT OF AI-ENABLED LIBRARY/IRC SERVICE ROBOT

RFI NUMBER: RFI33/2025-2026

This RFI calls for suitably qualified suppliers to provide information to Competition Commission of South Africa (CCSA) regarding a Request for Information for Costing of proposals for Supply, Configuration and Deployment of AI-enabled Library/IRC Service Robot.

Issue date: 26 FEBRUARY 2026

Closing Date: 05 MARCH 2026 11:00AM

For enquiries contact CCSA Supply Chain Management E-mail: tenders@compcom.co.za

This RFI is an invitation for person(s) to submit information(s) for the provision of the services as set out in the Specification contained herein. Accordingly, this RFI must not be construed, interpreted, or relied upon, whether expressly or implicitly, as an offer capable of acceptance by any person(s), or as creating any form of contractual, promissory or other rights. No binding contract or other understanding for the supply of services will exist between CCSA and any Respondents unless and until CCSA has executed a formal written contract with the selected supplier.

REQUEST FOR INFORMATION (RFI)

RFI NUMBER: RFI33/2025-2026

RFI TITLE: REQUEST FOR INFORMATION FOR COSTING FOR PROPOSALS SUPPLY, CONFIGURATION AND DEPLOYMENT OF AI-ENABLED LIBRARY/IRC SERVICE ROBOT.

EXPECTED TIMEFRAMES

RFI PROCESS	EXPECTED DATES
RFI Advertisement Date	26 FEBRUARY 2026
RFI Available from	26 FEBRUARY 2026
Compulsory Briefing Session Date & Time	N/A
RFI Closing Date and Time	05 MARCH 2026 AT 11:00AM
Delivery Venue: Electronics Submission	tenders@compcom.co.za
Contact details	tenders@compcom.co.za

CCSA retains the right to change the timeframe whenever necessary and for whatever reason it deems fit. Respondents interested in participating must register their interest by providing company name, contact person, telephone, cell number and email address to CCSA, please indicate RFI number on the subject line. This will ensure that any addenda and clarification to this RFI are communicated to all participants.

1. MANDATORY DOCUMENTS

- 1.1 Proof of registration on CSD report (Central Supplier Database)
- 1.2 Company Profile
- 1.3 Client List where the services were provided

2. DEFINITIONS

- 2.1 **“RFI”** - a request for information, which is a written official enquiry document encompassing all the terms and conditions of the information in a prescribed or stipulated form.
- 2.2 **“RFI response”** - a written response in a prescribed form in response to an RFI.
- 2.3 **“Respondent”** – any person (natural or juristic) who forwards an acceptable RFI in response to this RFI with the intention of being the main contractor should the RFI be awarded through a competitive bid process.

3. CONFIDENTIALITY

- 3.1 All information related to this request for information both during and after completion is to be treated with strict confidence.
- 3.2 Should the need however arise to divulge any information gleaned from the service which is either directly or indirectly related to the CCSA, written approval to divulge such information will have to be obtained from CCSA.
- 3.3 The Respondents must ensure that confidential information is: maintained confidential; not disclosed to or used by any unauthorised person; so as to prevent any disclosure or unauthorised use with at least the standard of care that Respondents maintain to protect their own confidential information; only used for the purpose of considering and responding to this RFI; and not reproduced in any form except as required for the purpose of considering and responding to this RFI.
- 3.4 Respondents must ensure that access to confidential information is only given to those of its partners, officers, employees and advisers who require access for the purpose of considering and responding to this RFI; and those partners, officers, employee and advisers are informed of the confidential information section and keep that information confidential.
- 3.5 This bid remains at all times the property of the Competition Commission of South Africa (CCSA).
- 3.6 No rights other than as provided in this bid and in respect of the confidential information are granted or conveyed to bidder/s

Name of Respondent: _____

Physical Address: _____

Respondent's contact person:

Name: _____

Telephone: _____

Mobile: _____

Fax: _____

E-mail address: _____

4. THE MANNER OF SUBMISSION OF THE RFI

- 4.1 Respondent shall submit RFI response in accordance with the prescribed manner.
- 4.2 Respondent shall submit one **emailed submission** including relevant supporting documents.
- 4.3 The original copy must be signed by an authorised employee, agent or representative of the respondent.
- 4.4 The subject line on the email submission must be clearly marked with the responding organisation's name and RFI number and description of RFI.
- 4.5 Respondent must clearly outline costing implications of the solution required, as well as any economic factors (i.e. exchange rate implication) that may pose a risk impact against said costing.

5. BACKGROUND

- 5.1 The Competition Commission (Commission) is a statutory body constituted in terms of the Competition Act, No. 89 of 1998 (the Act).
- 5.2 It is one of three, independent competition regulatory authorities established in terms of the Act, with the other two being the Competition Tribunal and the Competition Appeal Court.
- 5.3 The Commission is empowered by the Competition Act to investigate, control and evaluate restrictive business practices, abuse of dominant positions, mergers, undertake market inquiries and advocacy in order to achieve equity and efficiency in the South African economy.
- 5.4 CCSA is a public entity listed in schedule 3A of the Public Finance Management Act (PFMA), and acts in compliance with section 217 of the Constitution of South Africa and applicable Public Procurement Regulations and Prescripts.
- 5.5 The CCSA therefore requires a suitably qualified and experienced service provider to supply, configure, deploy, and support a Library/Information Resource Centre (IRC) Service Robot capable of enhancing user experience and modernising library operations. The selected service provider must demonstrate proven expertise in robotics solutions, digital library technologies, artificial intelligence (AI) integration, and automation within public-facing information environments. The service provider must be able to deliver a comprehensive, end-to-end solution that includes the robot hardware, operating software, customisation, training, maintenance, and integration with

existing information and knowledge management systems. The solution is expected to align with the CCSA's commitment to innovation, digital transformation, and improved service delivery standards

6. SITUATION ANALYSIS

- 6.1 Currently, the Commission utilises OCLC WorldShare Management Services as its primary Library Management System, alongside RFID-enabled infrastructure used for tracking and managing library assets. While these systems provide strong cataloguing, circulation, and inventory capabilities, there is limited real-time operational visibility and automated notification capability across internal collaboration channels. Library staff and system administrators must often rely on manual monitoring of events such as circulation activity, overdue materials, system alerts, and RFID security triggers. This creates opportunities for improved efficiency through automated alerts, event-driven monitoring, and integrated communication tools.
- 6.2 To address these challenges, the Commission is exploring the introduction of an IRC Robot solution capable of integrating with the existing library management and RFID systems. Such a solution would enable real-time notifications, automation of routine queries, monitoring of system events, and improved situational awareness for administrators and library staff. Implementing a secure, scalable, and compliant automation tool will support faster response to operational issues, strengthen oversight of library resources, and align with broader digital transformation initiatives within the Commission.

7. SCOPE OF WORK

7.1 Platform Provision

- Supply of an IRC Robot platform (open-source, proprietary, or custom-built).
- Deployment architecture design.
- Installation and configuration.

7.2 System Integration

Integration must be implemented with:

- OCLC WorldShare Management Services
- RFID library tracking systems
- Internal monitoring tools (if applicable)

7.3 Development

Where required, vendors must provide:

- Custom module development
- API integration development
- Workflow automation scripting
- Alerting and notification services

7.4 Security and Compliance

- Security hardening
- Compliance alignment with government ICT policies
- Data privacy protection

7.5 Training and Knowledge Transfer

- Administrator training
- Documentation
- Operational runbooks

7.6 Support and Maintenance

- System support
- Software updates
- Performance monitoring

7.7 Functional Requirements

7.7.1. IRC Connectivity

The solution must support:

- Standard IRC protocol (RFC compliant)
- SSL/TLS encrypted connections
- SASL authentication
- Multi-network connectivity
- Multi-channel management
- Automatic reconnection
- Secure credential storage
- Channel administration capabilities

7.7.2. Library System Integration

The solution must integrate with:

- OCLC WorldShare Management Service Vendors must indicate support for:
Integration Methods
- REST API integration
- Webhook / event-based architecture
- SIP2 protocol (where applicable)
- OAuth / API key authentication
- Scheduled synchronization tasks

Supported Events

The bot must support real-time notifications for:

- New acquisitions
- Loan transactions
- Overdue materials
- Reservation and hold updates
- Catalog record updates
- System warnings or alerts

Command Capabilities

The IRC robot must support commands that allow authorised users to query:

- Item availability
- Circulation statistics
- Loan summaries

- Bibliographic information
- User account status (subject to privacy compliance)

Notification Capabilities

- Channel-based alerts
- Direct administrator alerts
- Scheduled summaries
- Escalation alerts

7.7.3. RFID System Integration

The IRC Robot must integrate with the Commission's RFID-enabled library environment.

Supported Functions

- Real-time RFID event ingestion
- Monitoring of check-in and check-out activity
- Security gate alerts
- Inventory scanning notifications
- Lost or misplaced item alerts
- RFID exception logging

Vendor Requirements

Vendors must specify:

- Supported RFID standards
 - ISO 15693
 - ISO 18000-3
 - Other applicable standards
- Integration mechanisms such as:
 - REST APIs
 - Middleware connectors
 - Message queue systems
 - Event streaming platforms
- Real-time processing capabilities
- Alert delivery latency

7.7.4. Moderation and Automation

The solution must support automation features including:

- Keyword filtering
- Role-based access control
- Anti-spam protection
- Flood protection
- Command rate limiting
- Automated workflows
- Custom scripts
- Administrative command controls

7.7.5. Logging and Reporting

The solution must provide:

- Persistent logging of IRC activity

- Secure archival of logs
- Audit trail capability
- Export functionality (CSV / JSON / API)
- Administrative reporting dashboard
- Compliance reporting features

7.8 Technical Requirements

7.8.1. Architecture

The solution must support:

- On-premises deployment
- Private cloud deployment
- Containerised deployment (Docker or Kubernetes preferred)
- High availability
- Disaster recovery capability
- Horizontal scaling

7.8.2. Security Requirements

The Commission requires enterprise-grade security controls including:

- TLS 1.2 or higher encryption
- Secure credential vaulting
- Role-Based Access Control
- Multi-Factor Authentication
- Comprehensive audit logging

Compliance alignment with:

- POPIA
- ISO/IEC 27001
- Government ICT security frameworks

Vendors must provide:

- Security architecture documentation
- Vulnerability management processes
- Patch management lifecycle
- Penetration testing reports (where available)

7.8.3. Performance Requirements

The solution must support:

- Concurrent monitoring of multiple IRC channels
- High message throughput
- Configurable scaling
- Minimum availability target of 99.5%
- Defined Recovery Time Objective (RTO)
- Defined Recovery Point Objective (RPO)

7.9 Integration Architecture

Vendors must describe the following:

- Integration architecture with OCLC WorldShare Management Services
- Integration architecture with RFID middleware
- API gateway requirements

- Event-driven architecture capabilities
- Message queue technologies supported
- Data flow diagrams
- Data protection and privacy controls

7.10 Support and Maintenance

Vendors must provide information on:

- Service Level Agreements (SLAs)
- Incident response timelines
- Support availability (24/7 preferred)
- System monitoring
- Upgrade strategy
- Patch management
- End-of-life policies

7.11 Implementation Methodology

Vendors must outline the proposed approach including:

Project Phases

- Discovery and planning
- Architecture design
- Development and integration
- Testing
- Deployment
- Post-implementation support

Additional Requirements

- Timeline estimates
- Project governance model
- Resource allocation
- Testing methodology
- User Acceptance Testing
- Training and knowledge transfer

The Commission aims to identify a solution that will:

- Enhance operational visibility
- Automate library system notifications
- Improve RFID monitoring
- Strengthen collaboration and response times
- Maintain strict security and governance compliance

8. ESTIMATE COSTING

Product Offering	Estimate Cost
Costing for proposals to supply, configuration and deployment of AI-enabled library/IRC service robot (all inclusive)	
VAT	
Total Cost	

9. GENERAL INFORMATION

Enquiries in respect of this RFI should be addressed to:

SUPPLY CHAIN MANAGMENT

E-mail: tenders@compcom.co.za

All queries MUST be e-mailed

END OF THE REQUEST FOR INFORMATION DOCUMENT