

Procurement of Legal Services Partner

Invitation to Submit an Expression of Interest (EOI)

1. Introduction

England Athletics invites Expressions of Interest from suitably qualified and experienced legal services providers to become its preferred legal services partner. This appointment will support the organisation in delivering its strategic objectives, managing risk effectively, and ensuring the highest standards of governance, safeguarding, welfare and integrity across the sport of athletics in England.

This tender is intended to appoint a legal partner that can provide responsive, specialist and proportionate advice tailored to the needs of a National Governing Body (NGB) of sport, operating within a complex regulatory, safeguarding and stakeholder environment.

2. About England Athletics

England Athletics is the National Governing Body for athletics in England. It is responsible for the development, governance and regulation of athletics and running disciplines across the country, working with affiliated clubs, counties, competition providers, volunteers, officials and partners.

England Athletics operates as a membership-based governing body and is responsible for ensuring safe, inclusive and well-governed participation in the sport, supporting athlete and workforce development, setting policy frameworks, and maintaining compliance with Sport England, UK Sport and wider regulatory expectations.

Strategic Context: Athletes and Runners at the Heart – Strategic Plan 2021–2032

England Athletics' Strategic Plan 2021–2032 sets out a long-term vision to create a sport that is inclusive, accessible, safe and welcoming for everyone. The strategy focusses on participation, clubs, competition, coaches and officials and pathway for talented athletes. The appointed legal services partner will contribute to the successful delivery of these strategic priorities across the life of the partnership, through the legal services provided (see section 3).

3. Scope of Legal Services Required

England Athletics anticipates requiring support across the following areas (this list is indicative and not exhaustive):

- Safeguarding and Welfare – advice on safeguarding and welfare cases, disciplinary matters, and compliance with statutory and sport-sector safeguarding standards.
- Data Protection and Information Governance – GDPR compliance, Subject Access Requests (SARs), data breaches, ICO engagement and policy development.

- Contract Drafting and Commercial Matters – drafting, review and negotiation of commercial, sponsorship, funding and supplier contracts.
- Selection Policies and Appeals – legal advice on selection frameworks, risk mitigation, appeals and eligibility disputes.
- Governance and Company Secretarial Support – advice supporting the Company Secretary, Board and sub-committees including constitutional matters and Code for Sports Governance compliance.
- Dispute Resolution – internal disputes, member complaints, regulatory or disciplinary disputes, mediation, arbitration and litigation support where required.
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion – advice on EDI compliance, inclusive policy development and management of discrimination or harassment issues.
- Employment Law – employment, worker and volunteer matters including grievances, disciplinaries, restructures and tribunal claims.

4. Expression of Interest Requirements

Interested providers should submit an Expression of Interest addressing the following criteria:

1. Understanding and Experience of NGBs – demonstrable experience working with National Governing Bodies of sport or comparable membership-based organisations.
2. Track Record and Relevant Experience – evidence of delivering similar services, supported by examples or case studies.
3. Legal Expertise – breadth and depth of expertise across the service areas set out in this document, including access to specialist advice.
4. Fee Structure and Value for Money – clear and transparent pricing, proportionality of advice and cost-control measures.
5. Approach to Partnership Working – accessibility, responsiveness, relationship management and collaborative working style.
6. Value Added Services – training, briefings, horizon scanning or other additional benefits offered for England Athletics and its members.

A weighting of the criteria that will be used in the assessment of EOIs is included in Appendix A.

5. Procurement Timetable

Submission of Expressions of Interest: 12:00 noon, 29 May 2026

Invitation to interview issued: by 12:00 noon, 5 June 2026

Interviews: week commencing 15 June 2026 (venue to be confirmed)

6. Submission and Conditions

Expressions of Interest should be submitted electronically and clearly marked 'Legal Services Partner – Expression of Interest'. Please use the email address below.

7. Informal Enquiries

For an informal discussion or further information, please contact:

Dan Isherwood

Operations Director, England Athletics

Email: disherwood@englandathletics.org

Telephone: 07880 052133

8. Confidentiality and Disclaimer

All information contained in this tender document is confidential and must not be disclosed to third parties without prior consent. England Athletics is not obliged to appoint a provider as a result of this process and reserves the right to terminate or amend the process at any stage

Appendix A – Evaluation Scoring Matrix

Criterion	Weighting	Score (1-5)	Weighted Score
Understanding of NGB environment	15%		
Relevant experience and track record	15%		
Technical legal expertise	15%		
Fee structure and value for money	15%		
Partnership working approach	20%		
Value-added services	20%		