

EXPRESSION OF INTEREST (EOI)



MUNICIPAL COUNCIL OF MANZINI

EXPRESSION OF INTEREST FOR ESTABLISHMENT OF A COFFEE SHOP AND TOURISM INFO CENTER AT KING BHUNU TRIAL SITE

Procurement Method:	Expression of Interest
Subject of Procurement:	Establishment of a coffee shop and tourism info center at King Bhunu trial site
Procurement Reference Number:	EOI003 of 2025/2026
Date of Issue:	23.03.2026
Participation: International/National	International

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Invitation for Establishment of Coffee Shop and Tourism Info Center at King Bhunu Trial Site

1. Introduction

The Municipal Council of Manzini hereby invites Expressions of Interest from suitably qualified and experienced private entrepreneurs or companies to partner in the establishment of a heritage-led mixed-use facility at King Bhunu's Trial Site in Manzini. This initiative seeks proposals to design, landscape and operate a sensitively integrated development comprising a coffee shop, tourism information centre and supporting public amenities, while restoring and preserving the historical integrity of this nationally significant site.

2. Project Overview and Scope

King Bhunu's Trial Site holds profound cultural and historical importance, commemorating events of 1898 and anchored by the historic pod mahogany tree ("Bhunu's Tree"). Through this Expression of Interest, the Municipality aims to revitalize the site into an attractive, safe, and educational public destination that enhances visitor experience and strengthens tourism. The selected private partner will enter into a concession arrangement to deliver a sustainable commercial operation that supports heritage interpretation, promotes tourism development, and contributes to the social and economic vitality of Manzini. The Municipal Council anticipates the scope of work to encompass, but not be limited to:

- 2.1 Restoration and preservation of the historic plaque, monument, site features and surrounding landscape.
- 2.2 An eco-friendly coffee shop and tourism information center (suggested options: recycled shipping-container design or suitably themed structure) incorporating local art and handicrafts.
- 2.3 Public amenities: shaded seating, park benches, eco-smart restrooms with disability access, charging points, and free public Wi-Fi.
- 2.4 Secure, visually appropriate fencing/retaining wall and improved lighting for safety.
- 2.5 Pedestrian connection to Manzini Main Market and designated parking/stand bays for tour vehicles/buses.
- 2.6 Operation & maintenance plan for the concession period.

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3. Site Location



Image 1: Locality Map for Bhunu’s Trial Site in Manzini, Plot R/272/M, Cnr Nkosehlusaza & Sandlane Street, opposite Manzini National Library.

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Image 2: Perimeter Map for Bhunu’s Trial Site

4. Required Contractor Qualifications and Experience

The Municipal Council of Manzini invites Expressions of Interest from contractors/suppliers who possess the following qualifications and experience:

- 4.1 Proven Track Record:** Proven track record in the successful delivery of comparable projects, particularly those involving **tourism facilities, heritage sites, cultural centers, restaurants/coffee shops, visitor centers, or mixed-use public developments.**
- 4.2 Expert Team:** Access to a competent, multidisciplinary professional team with experience in delivering high-quality, context-appropriate developments. Demonstrated ability to incorporate heritage conservation, visitor flow, and public safety into design solutions is essential.
- 4.3 Operational and Management Capacity:** Demonstrated experience in the operation and management of hospitality or tourism-related facilities, including coffee shops, visitor information centres, or similar public-facing services. Proponents must show capacity to deliver sustainable operations, quality customer service, and ongoing facility maintenance throughout the concession period.

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4.4 Financial Capacity and Sustainability: Evidence of financial stability and access to sufficient capital to undertake the design, construction, and long-term operation of the facility.

4.5 Commitment to Heritage Preservation, Quality, and Safety: Strong commitment to preserving and respecting the historical and cultural significance of King Bhunu's Trial Site. appropriate measures to safeguard heritage features and visitors.

4.6 Local Context and Regulatory Understanding: Demonstrated understanding of the local socio-economic context, tourism landscape, and regulatory framework within Manzini and Eswatini.

4.7 Community and Tourism Development Focus: Commitment to supporting local economic development through job creation, use of local suppliers where feasible, and collaboration with tourism stakeholders to enhance Manzini's attractiveness as a visitor destination.

4.8 Sustainability: Prioritize a holistic sustainability framework by sourcing eco-friendly materials that honor Swazi authenticity and historical heritage, while integrating renewable energy solutions, passive design principles, and comprehensive water conservation systems.

5. Participation & Eligibility (Non-Discrimination and Equivalence)

This procurement is open to both Eswatini and foreign firms/consortia. No tenderer shall be excluded on the basis of nationality.

Where country-specific registrations or certificates are requested, foreign tenderers shall provide 'or equivalent' documents issued by their country of registration that demonstrate legal capacity, tax compliance, labour compliance and social security compliance.

Where an equivalent is submitted, include an English translation (where applicable) and a brief mapping note demonstrating equivalence to the requested document.

6. Procurement Method & Process

This EOI will be used to develop a shortlist for a subsequent Request for Proposals (RFP) for a concession/lease arrangement at King Bhunu Trial Site in accordance with the Public Procurement Act, 2011 (Section 43) and the Public Procurement Regulations, 2020 (Part IX).

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6.1 Publication & Communications: The EOI and subsequent notices will be published on the Eswatini Government website and at least one local publication of wide circulation. All clarifications will be issued in writing to all applicants.

6.2 Clarifications: All enquiries must be emailed to tenders@manzinicity.co.sz no later than seven (7) calendar days before the submission deadline. Responses will be circulated to all who obtained the EOI.

6.3 Site Visit and Pre-Bid Meeting (Optional): An optional site visit and briefing session will be held as follows:

- **Date:** Friday, 17 April 2026
- **Time:** 12:30 PM
- **Venue:** King Bhunu Trial Site, Manzini

Applicants are strongly encouraged to attend the site visit to familiarise themselves with site conditions and the project environment.

Any **clarifications, questions, or information requests** raised during the site visit will be recorded, and the official **minutes and written responses** will be circulated to **all** who obtained the EOI.

Non-attendance shall **not** disqualify an applicant. However, applicants shall be deemed to have fully inspected the site and to have understood all site conditions that may affect their proposal. Minutes and clarifications will be circulated to all who obtained the EOI.

7. Evaluation & Shortlisting

Applications will undergo a preliminary eligibility check to meet all Administrative Compliance requirements; and Score at least 70 points in the Technical Evaluation.

Eligible EOIs will be scored to develop a shortlist of three (3) to six (6) qualified top ranked qualified applicants.

7.1 Fewer than three (3) qualified applicants

If fewer than three qualified applicants achieve the minimum score:

a) Two Qualify:

Both applicants are shortlisted.

b) One Qualifies:

The procuring entity may:

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- Proceed with that single applicant, or
- Request re-submission of EOIs, or
- Re-advertise the EOI.

c) Zero Qualify:

The process is cancelled and the EOI is re-advertised or revised.

7.2 Tie-breaking Mechanism

In case of equal scores affecting the shortlist, the following tie breakers apply in order:

- a) Highest score in Relevant Experience
- b) Highest score in Key Personnel Qualifications
- c) Highest score in Financial Capacity
- d) Higher level of local participation (only where permissible)
- e) Final Tie-Break: The committee may
 - Conduct clarification interviews, or
 - Conduct a documented random draw, or
 - Apply internal procurement rules

All tie-breaking decisions will be fully documented for transparency.

7.3 Only shortlisted applicants will receive the RFP. A detailed risk allocation will be provided in the RFP.

Scored Criteria (100 points):

- Cover letter (10);
- Company/Consortium Profile (20);
- Relevant Experience (30);
- Key Personnel Qualifications (25)
- Financial Capacity (15);

Only information submitted in the EOI will be considered.

Outcome Notice: All applicants will be informed in writing of the shortlisting outcome. Unsuccessful applicants may request reasons in writing within 14 days; the Municipality will respond within 14 days.

8. Lease - Key Commercial Parameters (Indicative)

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Structure: lease for design, construction, operation and maintenance of a coffee shop and tourism information centre with public amenities at King Bhunu Trial Site. Land remains Government property.

Term: 6 years (including construction), subject to negotiation and performance conditions in the RFP reviewable every 2 years.

Investment & Reversion: The private partner funds all design, approvals, capex, fit-out and O&M; permanent improvements revert to the Government at term end unless otherwise agreed.

Indicative Risk Allocation: Design/Construction - Private; Cost Overruns/Time - Private (except Municipality-caused delays); Operations & Maintenance - Private;

Demand/Revenue - Private (subject to relief events); Regulatory/Heritage/Permits - Municipality to facilitate/statutory approvals, private to obtain/comply; Force Majeure - Shared as per industry norms.

Heritage & Environment: All works must preserve the historical and cultural integrity of the site and comply with applicable standards e.g. Town Planning Act, Building Act, SNTC Act, Environmental Act.

Local Participation: Proponents are encouraged to partner with Swati companies and citizen service providers and to use locally produced goods where feasible (points may be allocated at RFP).

9. Next Stage (RFP)

Shortlisted firms will receive an RFP including:

- Draft Lease Agreement;
- Detailed site information and surveys;
- Final risk allocation;
- Evaluation method; and
- Negotiation parameters in line with the Regulations.

Award Transparency: Following the award decision at RFP stage, a Best Evaluated Tenderer Notice will be issued and a standstill period observed in accordance with the Act.

Complaints/Review: Applicants may seek review in accordance with the Act; during

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review, no contract shall be awarded until completion of the review process, save as permitted in the Act/Regulations.

10. Submission Requirements

Interested entrepreneurs and businesses are requested to submit their Expression of Interest, which should include the following documentation and shall serve as the evaluation criteria:

- A cover letter formally expressing interest in this project.
- An overview of your company/consortium, including legal name, address, and contact details.
- A summary of relevant experience, highlighting similar projects undertaken.
- Brief profiles of key personnel proposed for the project, accompanied by their CVs and Copies of relevant qualifications/certificates.
- Preliminary financial capacity statement or evidence of financial soundness.

Services providers are also requested to submit together with the EOI the following or equivalent documents for foreign applicants:

- a certified copy of a valid Trading License or Equivalent original/ valid Tax Compliance Certificate,
- a certified copy of a current Labour Compliance Certificate,
- a certified copy of ENPF Compliance Certificate,
- certified copy of Form J and Form C or equivalent.

Interested service providers may obtain further information from the City Planner Projects, Nokuphila Shabalala, and Acting Chief Planning Officer Tive Nxumalo on the following contacts;

Email: nokuphila.shabalala@manzinity.co.sz and tive.nxumalo@manzinity.co.sz

Completed Expression of Interest must be submitted no later than **12H00 noon on the 17 April 2026**, via email to tenders@manzinity.co.sz, Subject line - **EOI003 of 2025/2026 Establishment of a coffee shop and tourism info center at King Bhunu trial site - [company name]**.

11. Disclaimer

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This EOI is an invitation for interested parties to express their interest and does not constitute a commitment or offer by the Municipal Council of Manzini to enter into any agreement or contract. The Council reserves the right to accept or reject any EOI, to annul the EOI process, and to reject all EOIs at any time without any liability. Only shortlisted candidates will be invited to submit a detailed Request for Proposal (RFP), in accordance with Regulation 69 of the Public Procurement Regulations (2020).

12. Statutory Complaints and Administrative Review Procedure

In accordance with the Public Procurement Act, 2011, Sections 46-54, and the Public Procurement Regulations, 2020, all Tenderers are advised of their statutory rights and obligations relating to the lodging of complaints and administrative review of procurement decisions.

12.1 Right to Lodge a Complaint

Any Tenderer who claims to have suffered, or who may suffer, loss or injury due to a breach of a duty imposed on the Procuring Entity under the Act or the Regulations, may lodge a complaint and seek administrative review as provided under Sections 46-54.

12.2 Stage 1: Complaint to the Controlling Officer (Internal Review)

(a) Submission Address

Complaints must be submitted in writing to:
The Controlling Officer / Chief Executive Officer
Municipal Council of Manzini
P.O. Box 418, Manzini

Email: qrm@manzincity.co.sz

(b) Timeframe

A complaint must be lodged within ten (10) working days from the date when the Tenderer became aware—or reasonably should have become aware—of the circumstances giving rise to the complaint.

(c) Obligations of the Procuring Entity

The Controlling Officer shall immediately investigate, suspend contract award until review completion, and issue a written decision within ten (10) working days.

(d) Contents of the Decision

The decision shall indicate whether the complaint is upheld or dismissed, reasons for the decision, and corrective measures.

12.3 Stage 2: Administrative Review by ESPPRA

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If dissatisfied with the Controlling Officer's decision or no decision is issued, the Tenderer may apply for Administrative Review to the Eswatini Public Procurement Regulatory Agency (ESPPRA).

(a) Timeframe

A complaint to ESPPRA must be lodged within ten (10) working days from the date the decision was issued or should have been issued.

(b) ESPPRA Obligations

ESPPRA shall notify the Procuring Entity, prohibit contract award during review, and constitute an Independent Review Committee (IRC).

12.4 Independent Review Committee (IRC)

The IRC shall investigate and issue a written decision within fifteen (15) working days. Remedies may include prohibiting unlawful actions, annulling decisions, substituting decisions, awarding cost compensation, terminating proceedings, or recommending contract termination.

12.5 Prohibition on Contract Award During Review

The Procuring Entity is prohibited from awarding a contract for ten (10) working days after internal review and for the duration of administrative review. The Government Tender Board may authorize award only in urgent public-interest circumstances.

12.6 Notice to Other Tenderers

ESPPRA shall notify all Tenderers of any administrative review lodged and allow participation in proceedings.

12.7 Right to Legal Representation

Tenderers are entitled to legal representation during any review or appeal.

12.8 Non-Retaliation Clause

No Tenderer shall be penalized or disadvantaged for exercising the right to lodge a complaint or seek administrative review.

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