

**Government of Pakistan**

**Pakistan Digital Authority**

*Established under the Digital Nation Pakistan Act, 2025*



## **PRE-QUALIFICATION DOCUMENT**

**FOR EMPANELMENT OF LEGAL ADVISORS**

**(Open Framework Agreement — 3 Years)**

**PQ Reference No.: PDA/TDRS/LEGAL-PANEL/2025-26/01**

## INVITATION TO SUBMIT PRE-QUALIFICATION APPLICATIONS

The Government of Pakistan, through the Pakistan Digital Authority (PDA) — a statutory body established under the Digital Nation Pakistan Act, 2025 — hereby invites Pre-Qualification Applications from eligible, tax-registered law firms and individual advocates for the purpose of:

### EMPANELMENT OF LEGAL ADVISORS FOR PAKISTAN DIGITAL AUTHORITY

*(Open Framework Agreement — Three-Year Panel)*

The framework will constitute an approved panel of pre-qualified legal service providers. On-need, call-off engagements shall be made from this panel on terms to be negotiated and agreed at the time of each engagement, in accordance with the procedures described in this document.

Activity	Description / Tentative Timeline
PQ Document Publication	14- May-2026 — Notice on e-PADS, National Dailies, and PDA Website
Submission Mode	Online via e-PADS ( <a href="http://www.eprocure.gov.pk">www.eprocure.gov.pk</a> )
Submission Deadline	02- June- 2026, by 11:00 AM Hours (PKT)
Opening of Applications	02-June-2026, at 11:30 AM Hours (PKT)
Panel Validity	Three (03) years from Framework Agreement execution date

Applications must be uploaded on e-PADS in accordance with the instructions set out herein. Applications submitted by any other mode shall not be accepted.

#### Head of Procurement

Pakistan Digital Authority

7th Floor, Kohsar Block, Pak Secretariat, Islamabad

Website: [www.pda.gov.pk](http://www.pda.gov.pk)

## 1. BACKGROUND AND OBJECTIVE

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The Pakistan Digital Authority (PDA) is a statutory body established under the Digital Nation Pakistan Act, 2025, mandated to lead the country's transition into a digitally empowered nation. As the apex regulatory and implementation body, PDA is responsible for executing the National Digital Masterplan, managing public funds, implementing government-mandated programmes, and ensuring compliance with applicable financial, regulatory, and governance frameworks.

PDA requires continuous, highly specialized, and expert legal advisory services to navigate the dynamic landscape of technology regulation, domestic and international litigation, policy drafting and enforcement, public procurement law, and compliance under the Act.

In order to ensure cost-efficiency, transparency, and operational flexibility, PDA proposes to establish an Open Framework Agreement by pre-qualifying and empanelling a pool of qualified legal service providers — comprising both law firms and individual advocates — for a period of three (3) years. The framework shall enable PDA to issue call-off engagements from the panel on an as-needed basis, without repeated procurement processes for each engagement, in compliance with PPRA Rules 2004 and the Framework Agreement provisions thereunder.

## 2. NATURE AND STRUCTURE OF THE FRAMEWORK AGREEMENT

### 2.1 Framework Agreement — Key Characteristics

The resultant Open Framework Agreement shall have the following key characteristics:

- This is not a contract for any specific quantum of work. It establishes a pre-approved panel only.
- PDA does not guarantee any minimum or maximum volume of legal work to any panel member.
- Multiple firms and individual advocates may be simultaneously empanelled across one or more service categories.
- Engagement is triggered exclusively by issuance of a Call-Off Order or a Work Order by the authorized PDA officer.
- All Call-Off Orders shall be issued in compliance with the procedures in Section 8 of this document.

### 2.2 Categories of Empanelment

Panel members shall be empanelled under one or both of the following categories:

Cat.	Category Name	Description of Services
A	Advisory & Documentation (Non-Litigation)	Legal opinions, contract drafting/vetting, MOU preparation, regulatory compliance, policy/rules drafting, procurement documentation review, and general non-litigious advisory services.
B-1	Civil, District, Sessions Courts, PIC, Ombudsman & Equivalent Fora	Representation and litigation services before all Civil/District/Sessions Courts, Pakistan Information Commission, Federal and Provincial Ombudsmen, and equivalent quasi-judicial bodies.
B-2	High Courts	Representation before all High Courts of Pakistan including constitutional petitions, service matters, and writ jurisdiction.
B-3	Supreme Court of Pakistan	Representation before the Supreme Court of Pakistan including civil appeals, constitutional matters, and original jurisdiction.
B-4	Alternate Dispute Resolution (National & International)	Representation and advisory services in domestic and international arbitration, mediation, and any other ADR forum.

Applicants may apply for Category A, any sub-category under Category B, or any combination thereof. Empanelment shall be category-specific. A panel member empanelled under Category A is not automatically empanelled under any Category B sub-category.

### 3. PRE-QUALIFICATION PROCESS

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The pre-qualification shall be conducted as an open, competitive, and transparent process in accordance with PPRA Rules, 2004.

- PDA shall evaluate applications strictly against the Eligibility Criteria (Section 5) and the Technical Evaluation Criteria (Section 6). Applications that do not meet all mandatory eligibility criteria shall be rejected without proceeding to technical scoring.
- All pre-qualified applicants shall be issued Framework Agreement Letters.
- PDA reserves the right to re-open the panel for additional applications on a rolling basis during the three-year framework period, subject to communication on e-PADS.
- PDA reserves the right to reject all applications or to cancel the pre-qualification process at any time prior to issuance of Framework Agreement Letters, without liability, in accordance with Rule 33 of the PPRA Rules, 2004.

## 4. ELIGIBILITY / MANDATORY CRITERIA

The following criteria are mandatory. Non-compliance with any single criterion shall render the application ineligible and it shall be rejected without referral to technical evaluation.

S/N	Eligibility Criterion	Documentary Evidence Required	Ref. Page No.
a	Certificate of Incorporation/Firm Registration.	Certified copy of certificate	
b	Active and valid registration with FBR for Income Tax and Sales Tax purposes as of the date of application opening. If exempted from Sales Tax, documentary evidence of exemption from the relevant authority must be attached.	FBR ATL status print / exemption certificate	
c	Undertaking on letterhead that the applicant has not been blacklisted or debarred by any Federal Government, Provincial Government, Semi-Government institution, regulatory authority, or international donor agency, as of the date of application opening.	Signed undertaking on letterhead	
d	For Category A and/or B-3: At least one partner must hold an LL.B. degree with a minimum of fifteen (15) years of post-qualification relevant legal experience and a valid, active Supreme Court license as of application opening date.	Degree certificate + Supreme Court license (attested)	
e	Evidence of at least three (03) existing or past legal advisory engagements with any government, semi-government, public sector. Engagement letters or contracts to be attached.	Minimum 3 engagement letters / contracts	
f	CVs of all key personnel proposed for the assignment, including qualifications, Bar enrollment numbers, and years of experience.	CVs with photograph and bar enrollment	
g	Completed and signed Bid-Securing Declaration (Annexure A) as prescribed in this document.	Annexure A — Signed	
h	Completed and signed Conflict of Interest Declaration (Annexure B), disclosing any existing retainer engagements or potential conflicts with PDA's mandate.	Annexure B — Signed	

*Note: Exact page numbers against each document must be indicated in the 'Ref. Page No.' column. Applications that do not reference page numbers may be rejected for non-compliance.*

## 5. TECHNICAL EVALUATION CRITERIA

Applications that pass all mandatory eligibility criteria shall be evaluated on the following technical criteria. A minimum qualifying score of Seventy (70) out of One Hundred (100) marks is required for empanelment.

S/N	Evaluation Criterion	Sub-Criteria / Scoring Bands	Max Marks	Proposal Page No.
1	Post-Qualification Legal Practice Experience	Above 20 years: 20 marks 15–20 years: 15 marks 10–14 years: 10 marks Below 10 years: 0 marks (Mandatory minimum: 15 years post-qualification)	20	
2	Legal Cases Handled (in last 3 years relevant to category applied for)	Above 20 cases: 15 marks 11–20 cases: 10 marks 5–10 cases: 5 marks Below 5 cases: 0 marks	15	
3	Technology, IT, and Digital Law Experience (Drafting/advising on IT laws, data protection, cybercrime, digital governance, or regulatory frameworks)	Demonstrated experience with 3+ IT/digital law matters: 15 marks 1–2 matters: 8 marks None: 0 marks	15	
4	Corporate, Compliance, and Public Sector Law Experience (Anti-corruption, PPRA compliance, public procurement disputes, regulatory compliance, sanctions, etc.)	Strong demonstrated experience: 10 marks Moderate experience: 5 marks No evidence: 0 marks	10	
5	Legal Team Strength (Qualified legal staff proposed for the framework)	More than 8 qualified staff: 20 marks 5–8 qualified staff: 15 marks 2–4 qualified staff: 10 marks 1 qualified advocate: 5 marks	20	
6	Proposed Approach and Understanding of PDA's Mandate (Quality of proposed methodology, understanding of the Digital Nation Pakistan Act 2025, and approach to delivering legal services under a framework engagement.)	Excellent understanding and detailed approach: 20 marks Adequate approach: 12 marks Generic/insufficient response: 0 marks	20	
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>100</b>	

*Note: Scores shall be assigned by the Evaluation Committee based on documentary evidence submitted. Self-declarations without supporting documents shall not be awarded marks.*

**Minimum Qualifying Score: 70/100.** Applicants scoring below 70 marks shall not be empanelled. PDA reserves the right to empanel all applicants meeting the minimum qualifying threshold, irrespective of their relative ranking, as this is a panel — not a single-source competitive award.

## 6. CALL-OFF MECHANISM UNDER THE FRAMEWORK

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### 6.1 General Principle

All engagements under the framework shall be by way of Call-Off Orders issued by the designated PDA authorizing officer. No work shall be performed and no liability shall accrue to PDA in the absence of a formally issued Call-Off Order.

### 6.2 Method of Award of Call-Off Orders

Call-off orders shall be awarded by one of the following methods, in order of preference:

1. Mini-Competition (Preferred Method): PDA shall invite competing proposals from all panel members empanelled under the relevant service category. The most advantageous proposal, evaluated on a combination of technical suitability and proposed fees, shall be selected. This method shall be used for all Category A assignments and for Category B matters where time permits.
2. Direct Award from Panel (Permitted in Defined Circumstances): A Call-Off Order may be awarded directly to a specific panel member — without mini-competition — only in the following circumstances, each of which must be documented and approved by the competent authority: (a) the matter requires urgent attention within 24–48 hours and mini-competition is not administratively feasible; (b) the matter requires specific expertise or a specific court license demonstrably held only by one panel member; (c) the matter involves the continuation of an ongoing case already assigned to that panel member; or (d) the contract value falls below the threshold established by PDA's Delegation of Powers for direct engagement.

### 6.3 Performance Monitoring

PDA shall maintain a performance record for each panel member. Instances of delay, non-compliance, poor quality of advice, or breach of confidentiality shall be recorded. A panel member with two or more documented adverse performance findings within any twelve-month period shall be issued a Show Cause Notice and may be removed from the panel by the PDA.

## 7. SCOPE OF LEGAL SERVICES — CATEGORIES

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### 7.1 Category A — Advisory & Documentation Services

- Advising on the interpretation and implementation of the Digital Nation Pakistan Act, 2025, including the powers and functions of PDA.
- Drafting and reviewing Statutory Instruments (Rules, Regulations, and Guidelines) under the Act.
- Handling legal challenges and complaints arising under the Act.
- Providing complete, accurate, and well-reasoned legal opinions, contract reviews, and documentation support within 3–5 working days of request. Urgent matters must be addressed within 24–48 hours as mutually agreed.
- Drafting, reviewing, and finalizing contracts, agreements, MOU's, and related instruments, including negotiations with government and private counterparts.
- Providing legal advice on public procurement compliance, including review of bid documents, evaluation reports, award decisions, and contracts under PPRA Rules, 2004.
- Advising on corporate, employment, data protection, cybercrime, anti-corruption, and regulatory compliance matters.
- Safeguarding the legal and contractual interests of PDA in all engagements, negotiations, and disputes.
- Maintaining high standards of diligence, ethics, and confidentiality in all assignments undertaken.

### 7.2 Category B — Litigation and Court Representation

- Representation before all courts and quasi-judicial bodies specified under the applicable sub-category (B-1 through B-4).
- Preparation and filing of pleadings, written statements, replies, applications, and other court documents.
- Appearance at all hearings, including miscellaneous and urgent hearings, on dates fixed by the court or tribunal.
- Providing regular updates to PDA on the status of matters, including attendance reports, next date of hearing, and recommended course of action.
- Providing copies of all filed documents, orders, and judgments to PDA promptly.

### 7.3 General Obligations — All Categories

- The Legal Advisor shall maintain full confidentiality of all PDA information, documents, and deliberations.
- The Legal Advisor shall immediately disclose any actual or potential conflict of interest upon its discovery, even post-empanelment. PDA reserves the right to immediately terminate the Call-Off Order and pursue legal remedy, including blacklisting, if a material undisclosed conflict is discovered.
- The Legal Advisor shall remain available for communication via telephone or in-person meetings as and when required by PDA.

- The Legal Advisor shall not accept any assignment from any person or entity that is a counterparty in any PDA litigation or dispute without PDA's prior written consent.

## 8. INSTRUCTIONS AND GENERAL CONDITIONS

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- This is an open, competitive, and transparent pre-qualification process conducted in accordance with PPRA Ordinance, 2002, PPRA Rules, 2004. Single stage-One envelope method is adopted.
- All applications shall be submitted online via e-PADS. Failure to upload the application on e-PADS shall result in rejection. Physical applications shall not be entertained.
- Applications shall be prepared in English or Urdu, or a combination thereof.
- All clarifications regarding this document shall be communicated exclusively through e-PADS. Clarifications communicated by PDA, whether in response to a query or otherwise, shall be deemed final, conclusive, and binding.
- PDA may reject all applications at any time prior to issuance of Framework Agreement Letters, without liability, in accordance with Rule 33 of the PPRA Rules, 2004. Upon request, PDA shall communicate the grounds for rejection to any applicant.
- Applicants shall bear all costs associated with the preparation and submission of their applications. PDA shall not be responsible or liable for those costs under any circumstance.
- Applicants are under an obligation to read and understand the complete Pre-Qualification Document. PDA shall not be responsible for claims or complaints arising from non-reading or misreading of the document.
- Only service providers appearing on the Active Taxpayers List (ATL) of FBR on the date of application opening are eligible. Applications from persons or firms not on ATL shall be rejected, per applicable PPRA and FBR requirements.
- PDA requires that all applicants observe the highest standards of ethics. Any form of corrupt, fraudulent, collusive, coercive, or obstructive practice — as defined under PPRA Rules — shall result in immediate rejection of the application and may result in blacklisting.
- If at any time during the framework period a panel member is found to have been blacklisted by any government body, its empanelment shall be immediately suspended and the matter referred to PDA's Procurement Committee for decision.
- In the event of a tie in technical scores during evaluation, PDA shall apply the following tiebreaker in sequence: (a) higher score in Criterion 3 (Technology Law Experience); (b) higher score in Criterion 1 (Years of Experience). If the tie persists, all tied applicants shall be empanelled.
- The panel register shall be reviewed annually. Panel members may be removed for material non-performance. The panel may be expanded by re-opening applications, as determined by PDA.
- For any technical difficulties with e-PADS, prospective applicants may contact PPRA at <https://www.ppra.org.pk/>.
- All payments under Call-Off Orders shall be subject to the panel member's active taxpayer status on ATL at the time of payment release. No payment shall be made if ATL status is inactive at that time.

- The panel member shall be responsible for all applicable taxes, stamp duty, and other statutory levies. This obligation shall be addressed in the terms of each Call-Off Order.

## ANNEXURE A — BID-SECURING DECLARATION FORM

(The applicant shall complete and sign this form and include it in the application.)

To: Head of Procurement, Pakistan Digital Authority, Islamabad

We, the undersigned, declare that:

We understand that, according to the conditions of this Pre-Qualification Document, applications must be supported by a Bid-Securing Declaration.

We accept that we will be blacklisted and cross-debarred from participating in the relevant category of public procurement proceedings for a period not exceeding six (06) months if, without engaging in corrupt or fraudulent practices, we are in breach of our obligations under the conditions of this document, because we:

- Have withdrawn our application during the period of application validity specified in this document; or
- Having been notified of our empanelment (issuance of Framework Agreement Letter), fail or refuse to execute the Framework Agreement; or
- Fail to disclose a material conflict of interest at the time of application or within a reasonable time of its subsequent discovery.

We understand this Bid-Securing Declaration shall expire if we are not empanelled, upon the earlier of: (i) our receipt of PDA's notification of the names of empanelled panel members; or (ii) twenty-eight (28) days after the expiration of our application validity period.

<b>Name of Applicant (Firm)</b>	
<b>Name of Authorized Signatory</b>	
<b>Title / Designation</b>	
<b>Signature</b>	
<b>Date</b>	
<b>Official Stamp / Seal</b>	

## ANNEXURE B — CONFLICT OF INTEREST DECLARATION

(The applicant shall complete and sign this form and include it in the application.)

To: Head of Procurement, Pakistan Digital Authority, Islamabad

I/We, the undersigned applicant, hereby declare that:

- I/We am/are not currently retained as legal advisor to, nor do I/we represent, any person or entity that is a counterparty in any pending litigation or dispute involving PDA.
- I/We do not hold any financial interest, directorship, partnership, or employment in any entity that is, to my/our knowledge, subject to regulatory action by PDA.
- I/We will immediately notify PDA in writing upon discovery of any actual or potential conflict of interest arising during the term of this framework.

The following existing engagements are disclosed for transparency (attach additional pages if required):

S/N	Client / Organization Name	Nature of Engagement	Any Conflict with PDA?
1			
2			
3			
4			

<b>Name of Applicant (Firm)</b>	
<b>Name of Authorized Signatory</b>	
<b>Signature</b>	
<b>Date</b>	

**END OF PRE-QUALIFICATION DOCUMENT**