

## **2026 Western Cape Economy Innovation Awards – Explanatory Document (±3 pages)**

### **Innovation: Procurement Client Centre (PCC), including the eProcurement System (ePS) and Western Cape Supplier Evidence Bank (WCSEB)**

#### **1) Introduction**

The Procurement Client Centre (PCC) is a province-wide procurement modernisation that reduces red tape and lowers the cost of doing business with the Western Cape Government. It integrates a digitised procurement platform (ePS) with a centralised supplier compliance repository (WCSEB) and a single, advisory-driven access point for suppliers across all 13 provincial departments. The result is a transparent, standardised, and accessible procurement ecosystem that simplifies supplier onboarding, consolidates compliance into a single annual submission, rationalises documentation, and automates publication and response to tens of thousands of RFQs each year. By removing systemic friction, the PCC broadens SMME participation, accelerates market access, and supports job-creating supply chains throughout the Western Cape.

#### **2) The Problem and Why This Innovation Was Necessary**

Before the PCC, suppliers faced duplication, inconsistent processes, opaque requirements and high administrative cost for routine compliance. Each department handled paperwork and checks independently, forcing suppliers, especially SMMEs, to resubmit the same documentation repeatedly and navigate variable turnaround times and formats. The uneven experience discouraged new market entrants, inflated bid costs and slowed procurement cycles, hampering procurement's role as an engine for investment and jobs. In short, an economy seeking inclusive growth required a single, standard, digital and user-friendly interface to government procurement that genuinely lowers barriers for emerging businesses and enables departments to purchase efficiently and fairly. The PCC was designed to solve exactly this province-wide constraint.

#### **3) What the Innovation Is — and How It Works**

The PCC is a centralised procurement-support ecosystem anchored on three mutually reinforcing elements:

1) The eProcurement System (ePS). Developed and run for provincial use, ePS automates the RFQ workflow and consolidates opportunity publication, submissions and responses within a single digital channel used by all departments. This increases visibility, integrity, and speed of competitive requests and makes the provincial market far easier to navigate for suppliers.

2) The Western Cape Supplier Evidence Bank (WCSEB). WCSEB centralises compliance: suppliers submit standard documents once (annually) and their pre-vetted status is available to all 13 departments as a single point of truth. This reform replaces repetitive document chasing with a streamlined, trustworthy, always-available repository.

3) The Procurement Client Centre service. A human-centred support hub offers onboarding assistance, multilingual guides, training, webinars/roadshows, and complaints resolution. The service model is co-designed with suppliers via feedback loops, perception surveys and engagement sessions, and is governed by a Service Charter signed by the MEC for Finance that sets responsiveness standards and accountability.

These three components are underpinned by policy and process innovations including the rationalisation of bid documentation, where formerly separate WCBD forms (4, 8, 9) were consolidated into a single, shorter WCBD-4 (six pages), cutting paperwork by  $\pm 60\%$  across departments and materially lowering supplier admin time and error risk. The changes have been embedded through Provincial Treasury Instructions and the Blueprint Accounting Officer's System, ensuring institutional consistency and sustainability.

#### **4) Alignment with the Awards Criteria**

##### **A) Scale of Beneficial Impact on the Western Cape Economy**

The PCC removes systemic bottlenecks in how firms access public procurement, one of the province's most consequential demand channels for goods and services. By digitising RFQ processes and centralising compliance, PCC reduces the marginal cost of bidding, particularly for SMMEs and emerging enterprises, and increases the number of credible, competitive submissions. This helps departments award faster without compromising integrity, enabling timelier delivery of services and infrastructure and improving the multiplier effect of provincial expenditure.

At scale, this means more suppliers can participate at lower cost; more RFQs translate into economic activity; and a more predictable, transparent procurement market improves private sector confidence to invest in capacity, hire staff and finance equipment, with knock-on effects on local employment and firm growth. The PCC thereby strengthens the province's "ease-of-doing-business" platform, fundamental to competitiveness and investment attraction.

##### **B) Number of Businesses and Employees Benefiting**

The PCC ecosystem supports between  $\pm 9,000$  and 12,000 compliant supplier profiles via WCSEB and manages in excess of 35,000 RFQs annually via ePS, exposing a very large, diverse supplier base to recurring opportunity flows across 13 departments. Each RFQ creates potential work for manufacturers, service providers, trades, professional services and logistics firms, and each award activates multi-firm supply chains with associated jobs. With compliance now centralised and standardised, new suppliers, including township and rural enterprises, face fewer barriers to market entry, broadening participation in the provincial economy.

##### **C) Novelty / Newness (including Adaptation to WC Context)**

The PCC is novel in design and delivery: a single provincial access point that fuses a digitised RFQ system with a single submission compliance bank and a service-oriented advisory centre. The documentation reform (WCBD consolidation) is a first for the province, implemented transversally and embedded in Treasury prescripts so that the innovation outlives personalities and pilot cycles. Equally important, the service was co-created with suppliers through regular engagement, surveys and helpdesk analytics, making it a true "use-informed" innovation. The PCC is designed for replication by other provinces and municipalities, and has already proven sustainability through in-house development and transversal adoption.

#### **5) Evidence of Results and Verifiability**

The SEA submission provides detailed category motivations and operational evidence that underpin this nomination. It records the central role of PCC in supplier onboarding; the automation of RFQs using ePS; the annual, single-point compliance via WCSEB; policy instruments that institutionalise the change (Provincial Treasury Instructions; Blueprint Accounting Officer's System); the Service Charter signed by the MEC for Finance; and the scale metrics ( $\pm 9,000$ –12,000 suppliers; 35,000+ RFQs per year). It also confirms the engagement model (roadshows, multilingual training,

feedback loops), and notes how the approach has reduced turnaround times, duplication and paperwork ( $\pm 60\%$  reduction), thereby directly lowering the cost and complexity of doing business with government. These details are verifiable within departmental systems and published prescripts.

## **6) Who Benefits — and How Business Performance Improves**

Businesses benefit through lower compliance friction, faster access to opportunities, and clearer, consistent rules across all departments. The reduction in duplicate submissions, the ability to submit once and be visible transversally, and the move to automated RFQs reduce the time and cost of participation, allowing firms to redirect resources to pricing, quality, and delivery rather than administration. With predictable documentation and transparent processes, firms can expand bidding activity across the Province without rebuilding compliance packs for each department. SMMEs in particular gain from the helpdesk and training features, which improve bid readiness, compliance accuracy, and confidence to compete. The net effect is higher participation, better competition, more credible pricing, and a healthier procurement market that supports provincial job creation and firm-level growth.

## **7) Governance, Sustainability and Longevity**

The PCC is transversal by design and embedded in policy instruments that codify processes and standards. Its core systems are sustainable for three reasons: (1) in-house development/ownership reduces reliance on bespoke external platforms; (2) low administrative overheads and centralisation create economies of scale; and (3) a service charter and complaints mechanism keep the model user-centred and accountable, so it improves through feedback rather than drift. Because the PCC standardises and digitises procurement access across 13 departments, its use and value compound over time: every new supplier registered, every form rationalised, and every RFQ automated adds to a self-reinforcing ecosystem that should operate, improve and scale for 10+ years. The PCC has already influenced provincial practice, with outputs and lessons shared through supplier events and Smart Procurement Conferences, indicating strong replication potential across spheres.

## **8) Conclusion — Why This Innovation Is Award-Worthy**

The PCC fundamentally improves the ease of doing business with the Western Cape Government by making procurement simpler, faster, fairer and more transparent. It directly expands participation, especially for SMMEs, by cutting paperwork and cost, and it increases the density of opportunity via a province-wide RFQ engine that is visible and accessible. It is novel in its integrated design and credible in its institutionalisation through Treasury policy instruments and a public service charter. It delivers systemic value to the economy by crowding more firms into government markets, enhancing competition, lowering transaction costs, and enabling timelier delivery of public services and infrastructure. For these reasons, the PCC is an outstanding example of public-sector innovation that catalyses economic growth and jobs in the Western Cape.