



11 December 2014

Clarification No 1

Reference: Open call for tenders No EEA/IEA/14/016

Title: Expert assistance with indicators, analysis, assessments and policy evaluation in support of the 7th Environmental Action Programme

Question 1

1. Is it correct that an expert can be included as an Associate Expert within more than one competing offers for the same tender process, provided that he/she is not included as a Partner in any of the bidding consortia?

2. Are there set limits to the share of a project budget which can be allocated to an Associate Expert (i.e. who is not a consortium partner)? Or limits set on what kinds of roles can be allocated to an Associate?

Answer 1

There are no restrictions concerning the use of Associate Experts, whose status would be that of subcontractors. They can offer their availability to more than one tenderer.

Pursuant to the selection criteria listed under section 11.2.3 of the tender specifications, tenderers shall provide evidence of their legal, financial and economic, technical and professional capacity to provide the requested services and demonstrate that they will have at their disposal the necessary resources for the performance of the contract. In the event where one or more subcontractors would be involved in the tender, then the ability to meet the requirements set in the selection criteria will be assessed in relation to the combined capacities of the tenderer and the subcontractors, as a whole. Please note that depending on the amount of work intended to be subcontracted, subcontractors may be required to supply the requested information and documentation on the exclusion and selection criteria (see sections 5, 11.1.2 and 11.2.1 of the tender specifications).

Regarding the second part of your question, there is no numerical minimum or maximum requirement as regard the potential involvement of subcontractors, however tenderers shall provide an indication of the proportion of the work they intend to subcontract, expressed for instance as a percentage of the work to be carried out (see annex 1 to the tender specifications). Tenderers shall also bear in mind the provisions of the draft framework contract (Annex 7 to the tender specifications), in particular Article II.12 thereof which provides that “the Contractor shall not subcontract without prior written authorisation from the Agency nor cause the Contract to be performed in fact by third parties”.

Question 2

1. Is there any binding CV template required to use for description of technical and professional capacity? If yes, where it could be found or downloaded?

2. Is there any binding template required to use for description of technical offer which should provide information requested under the sections 6, 7 and 11.3.1 of Annex 1 - tender specifications? If yes, where it could be downloaded?

Answer 2

The answer to both questions is no: as no reference to preferred templates was made in Annex 1, both the CVs and the technical offer can be submitted in a free format, provided that they include the relevant required information to enable the evaluation committee members to judge properly the quality and relevance of the tenderer's expertise and experience and that of their tender.

Please bear in mind that your tender should be self-explanatory and easy to read and understand. Its assessment will be based on your descriptions, not taking into account any information elsewhere (e.g. websites).

It is in your interest to keep your tender concise and well structured; maximise your chances: edit your tender tightly, strengthen or eliminate the weak points; put yourself in the position of an evaluator who has only a few hours to assess each tender; remind yourself of the selection and award criteria given in the tender specifications.

Question 3

We do not have a formal environmental policy. What exactly do you expect to be shown? Will a sustainability report of some sort meet the requirements?

Answer 3

An environmental policy is a written statement, usually signed by senior management, which outlines a business' aims and principles in relation to managing the environmental effects and aspects of its operations. There are no compulsory requirements regarding the environmental policy.

Such policy could contain, as an example, brief statements on the following criteria:

- *A commitment to continually improve your environmental performance;*
- *A commitment to effectively manage your significant environmental impacts;*
- *Monitoring progress and reviewing environmental performance against targets and objectives on a regular basis;*

- *A commitment to communicate your business' environmental aims and objectives to all staff, as well as to customers, investors and other external stakeholders.*

Where relevant, the company's environmental standards certificates can be mentioned and/or enclosed as well.

Some indicative examples of relevant certification:

- *Environmental Management Certificate: ISO 14001*
- *Quality Certificate: ISO 9001*
- *EMAS Registration*
- *FSC Certificate*

A sustainability report, if in line with the contents mentioned above, would be a valid document.

Question 4

A question was received as to the possibility to extend the deadline for submission of tenders with one week due to the Christmas holidays.

Answer 4

The EEA is willing to allow an extension until Monday 12 January 2015 to facilitate for possible tenderers to get the necessary documents and signatures due to the holiday period. For convenience sake an updated version of the relevant tender documents including this modification to the deadline for submission of tenders is available at <http://www.eea.europa.eu/about-us/tenders/eea-iea-14-006-expert>

Question 5

The group Milieu (Belgium) and Collingwood Environmental Planning (UK) is to our knowledge commissioned by EEA with the study "Mapping of available and scoping of new indicators to meet monitoring needs of the 7th EAP" and, according to the tender specifications, it is intended to complete the study in December 2014. As we consider the results of this study as an essential precondition to outline the tasks and works for the upcoming years, it would be of enormous importance to have access to the findings of this study in advance to the final completion of the technical proposal.

It is important in particular as the technical proposals are assessed by EEA against the following criteria: "Quality of the proposed approach, expected challenges and suggested ways to overcome them in order to deliver on indicator related support tasks" (citation of award criteria section 11.3.1).

Therefore is it possible to get access to the (preliminary) findings of the study “Mapping of available and scoping of new indicators to meet monitoring needs of the 7th EAP”? If the answer to such question is “no”, is it possible to extend the deadline for the submission of the proposals until the findings of the study “Mapping of available and scoping of new indicators to meet monitoring needs of the 7th EAP” are available?

Answer 5

It is correct that Collingwood Environmental Planning in association with Milieu law and policy consulting is currently finalising the deliverables of the negotiated procedure service contract 3424/B2014/EEA.55713 on ‘Mapping of available and scoping of new indicators to meet monitoring needs of the 7th Environmental Action Programme’.

However, it has never been the EEA’s intention to publically disseminate the results of this work as such and these deliverables have not been quality controlled by relevant EEA departments as well as by other EU institutions and international organisations. The EEA therefore does not plan at this stage to make these deliverables available.

Furthermore, the EEA does not consider the results of this work as a “precondition to outline the tasks and works for the upcoming years”. The EEA will be in the process of internal and external consultations over the coming months in order to determine the tasks and works for the coming years and the successful tenderer to whom the contract is to be awarded will be asked to provide support to this process.

Question 6

In the Annex 1 Tender Specifications on page 7 the general tasks are listed - the contractor(s) is/are expected to provide support on.

Bullet 4 of chapter 7 states as task “developing ways, methods and techniques to improve the timeliness of data and of derived indicators”. Could you clarify if this relates to the current set of indicators or newly to develop indicators? Another (related) question is if this task focusses on indicators and new available or alternative data sources or on the technical streamlining of indicators?

Answer 6

Economic indicators are, generally speaking, more up-to-date compared to environmental indicators. In the list of general tasks specified in section 7 to the tender specifications, the 4th bullet point shall be understood within that context. It refers to anything that one could do in order to have in the end environmentally relevant indicators that are more up-to-date than what is currently available. This way it refers to both current and to be developed indicators as well as to any data and/or any process that could result in more timely indicators. Such indicators could then be used, inter alia, in EEA’s annual indicator-based reports referred to in the tender specifications.

Question 7

In terms of demonstrating the technical and professional capacity (Part 11.2.3 of the Tender Specifications), we would like to clarify that - beyond the items listed under a) Human resources, b) Past contracts and c) environmental policy, such as CVs, professional experience cross table, etc. - there is no specific format required in which the technical and professional expertise should be documented, i.e. no reasoned summary statements, no fictitious bids, etc., and that each bidder is therefore free to present further information in the format that they deem most appropriate?

Answer 7

Please refer to question/answer 2 above.

Question 8

Regarding the financial proposal / price quotation (Annex 6), could you clarify

- a) What thresholds are applicable for designating whether an individual would fall into the category of junior or senior consultant, and
- b) Whether this classification applies to the level of experience at the time that the framework contract enters into force, or at the time that any specific agreement is launched under the framework contract. In other words - is the distinction between junior or senior consultants fixed for the duration of the framework contract, or is it possible for individuals to graduate from one category to another?

Answer 8

- a) *The reference to both profiles under section 11.2.3 of the tender specifications, first bullet point, (i), is meant to assess the professional and technical capacity of the tenderers to deliver the requested services according to the required years of experience at the point of the submission of a tender.*

This selection criterion seeks to ensure that only economic operators who fulfil a set of minimum criteria in terms of having sufficient and adequate human resources are let through to the detailed evaluation under the award criteria which aims at assessing the quality and financial value of the tender. Hence tenderers are requested under this selection criterion to give evidence of their technical and professional capacity through the provision of a minimum number of CVs, whereas under the award criteria tenderers are requested to demonstrate that their tender offers the best value for money.

- b) *The future framework contract require expert assistance from junior and senior consultants for EEA's activities related to indicators, analysis, assessments and policy evaluation in support of the 7th Environmental Action Programme in the areas described in section 6 of the tender specifications.*

Depending on the requirements of each specific contract in terms of the tasks to be performed and the deliverables to be submitted, junior or senior expertise or a combination of both, the contractor will propose experts, junior or senior or a combination of both, according to the CVs proposed in the tender who he deems are the most suitable to achieve the objective set. If staff members have gained additional professional experience in a field from junior to senior, this will be taken into consideration during the period of duration of the framework contract.