



Framework contract for the provision of travel arrangement services for the European Environment Agency (EEA)

Reference: Open call for tenders EEA/ADS/13/002

Closing date: 7.2.2014

1. Introduction to EEA

The European Environment Agency (EEA) is a European Union public body governed by Regulation (EC) No 401/2009 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 April 2009¹. The EEA role is to support the European Union in the development and implementation of environmental policy by providing relevant, reliable, targeted and timely information on the state of the environment and future prospects. The EEA also provides the necessary independent scientific knowledge and technical support to enable the Union and the member countries to take appropriate measures to protect and improve the environment as laid down in the Treaty and by successive Community action programmes on the environment and sustainable development. Currently, the EEA has 33 member countries (the Member States of the European Union, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway, Switzerland and Turkey).

The EEA is the hub of the European Environment Information and Observation Network (Eionet), a network of around 350 organisations across Europe through which it collects and disseminates environment-related data and information, including European Topic Centres. The EEA and Eionet contribute to the European Shared Environmental Information System (SEIS), a distributed, integrated, web-enabled information system based on a network of public information providers sharing environmental data and information. It builds on existing e-infrastructure, systems and services in the Member States and EU institutions.

There are approximately 200 staff members working at the EEA. These staff members come from a wide range of national, professional and cultural backgrounds. Their functions at the EEA vary from environment-related research and data-analysis to administrative or managerial tasks.

Further information about the work of EEA can be obtained on its website: <http://www.eea.europa.eu>.

¹ OJEU L 126 of 21.5.2009, p. 13.

2. Presentation of the tender

Tenders shall be submitted in accordance with the **double envelopes system**:

The outer envelope or parcel should be sealed with adhesive tape and signed across the seal and carry the following information:

- The call for tenders reference No **EEA/ADS/13/002**
- The contract title ***“Provision of travel arrangement services for the EEA”***
- The name of the tenderer
- The indication ***“Tender – Not to be opened by the internal mail services”***
- The address for submission of tender (as specified in the letter of invitation to tender)
- The date of submission shall be legible on the outer envelope or parcel

The outer envelope or parcel must contain three inner envelopes, i.e. Envelopes No 1, 2 and 3, corresponding to the following three sections: administrative section, technical offer and financial offer.

(a) Envelope No 1 – Administrative section shall include the following:

- The Tender submission form drawn up in accordance with the template in annex 1
- The declaration on exclusion criteria as required under section 9.1.2 drawn up in accordance with the template in annex 2
- The legal entity form as required under section 9.2.1 drawn up in accordance with the template in annex 3
- The financial identification form drawn up in accordance with the template in annex 4
- The evidence and documentation demonstrating the fulfilment of the selection criteria as required under sections 9.2.2 (economic and financial capacity) and 9.2.3 (technical and professional capacity)

(b) Envelope No 2 – Technical offer shall include the following:

The technical offer providing all information requested under sections 6 and 9.3.1 including information relevant to subcontracting as requested under section 4.3.

(c) Envelope No 3 – Financial offer shall include the following:

The financial offer providing all information requested under sections 8 and 9.3.2, drawn up in accordance with the template in annex 5.

Tenders shall be drafted in one of the official languages of the European Union, **preferably in English** (supporting evidence does not need to be translated) and submitted **in triplicate** (one signed original unbound and two copies).

It is important that tenders be presented in the correct format and include all documents necessary to enable the evaluation committee to assess them. Failure to respect these requirements will constitute a formal error and may result in the rejection of the tender.

Tenderers shall observe precisely the indications in points 2, 3, 4 and 6 of the letter of invitation to tender to ensure their tender are admissible. Late delivery will lead to the non-admissibility of

the tender and its rejection from the award procedure for this contract. Offers sent by e-mail or by fax will also be non-admissible and discarded. Envelopes found opened at the opening session will also lead to non-admissibility of the tender. Consequently, tenderers must ensure that their tenders are packed in such a way as to prevent any accidental opening during its mailing.

3. Confidentiality and protection of personal data

For the processing of this tendering procedure, the EEA observes the rules set in Regulation (EC) No 45/2001 on the protection of individuals with regard to the processing of personal data by Community institutions and bodies and on the free movement of such data (OJEU L 8 of 12.1.2001, p. 1).

For further detailed information please refer to the privacy statement available on the EEA external website at the following address: <http://www.eea.europa.eu/about-us/tenders/privacy-statement>.

4. Participation in the tendering procedure

Submission of a tender implies acceptance of the terms and conditions set out in the invitation to tender, in these tender specifications and in the draft framework contract attached to the latter (see annex 6) and, where appropriate, waiver of the tenderer's own general or specific terms and conditions. It is binding on the tenderer to whom the contract is awarded for the duration of the contract.

4.1. Eligibility

This call for tenders is open on equal terms to all natural and legal persons from one of the 33 EEA member countries and to all natural and legal persons established in a third country which has a special agreement with the European Union in the field of procurement on the conditions laid down in that agreement².

As proof of eligibility tenderers must indicate in the tender submission form (see annex 1) in which state they have their headquarters, registered office or residence, and provide the necessary supporting documents in accordance with their national law. If the tender is a natural person, he/she must provide a copy of identity card/passport or driving license and proof that he/she is covered by a social security scheme as a self-employed person.

4.2. Application

All eligible natural and legal persons (as per above) or groupings of such persons (consortia) may apply.

A consortium may be a permanent, legally established grouping or a grouping, which has been constituted informally for a specific tender procedure. If awarded the contract, the members of the consortium (i.e. the leader and all the other partners) will have an equal standing towards the EEA in executing the framework service contract and they will be jointly and severally liable to the EEA.

² At this point in time, tenderers established in one of the following countries are eligible: EEA member countries, i.e. EU-28, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway, Switzerland and Turkey; and under the stabilisation and association agreements: FYROM, Albania, Montenegro and Serbia.

The participation of ineligible natural or legal person will result in the automatic exclusion of that person. In particular, if that ineligible person belongs to a consortium, the whole consortium will be excluded.

The EEA will not request consortia to have a given legal form in order to be allowed to submit a tender, but reserves the right to require a consortium to adopt a given legal form before the contract is signed if this change is necessary for proper performance of the contract. This can take the form of an entity with or without legal personality but offering sufficient protection to the EEA contractual interests (depending on the member countries concerned, this may be for instance, incorporation or partnership or a temporary association). Consortia must identify one of their members as coordinator who will interface with the EEA.

Each member of a consortium must fulfil the conditions for participation mentioned in this section and section 4.1 above and provide the required documents listed in these tender specifications under sections 9.1 and 9.2 below. Therefore, each member of a consortium shall specify his role, qualifications and experience.

4.3. Subcontracting

A contractor may subcontract part of the services.

Tenderers must state what part of the work, if any, they intend to subcontract, and to what extent (for instance % of the total contract value), specifying the names, addresses and legal status of the subcontractors. If subcontracting is **not** envisaged, tenderers shall clearly state so in the tender submission form (see annex 1).

Legal persons must provide a document containing a list of the professional qualifications of the subcontractors and statement of the means of confidentiality when subcontractors are used. If awarded the contract, the contractor may not choose subcontractors other than those mentioned in the bids unless he obtains the prior written authorisation of the EEA. The overall responsibility of the work remains with the contractor.

Tenderers shall acknowledge (see annex 1) that the EEA reserves the right to request them at a later stage to provide documentation in relation to exclusion and selection criteria for any proposed subcontractors (see sections 9.1 and 9.2 below).

If awarded the contract, the contractor must ensure that Article II.17 of the draft framework contract (see annex 6) can be applied to subcontractors. Once the contract has been signed, Article II.12 of the above-mentioned draft framework contract shall govern subcontracting.

5. Contractual terms

In drawing up their bid tenderers should bear in mind the provisions of the standard framework contract and standard order form attached to these tender specifications (annex 6).

6. Subject of contract

The rules and conditions of travelling by members of staff on behalf of the EEA (“missions”) are established in the Implementing rules for EEA missions adopted by the EEA Management Board on 12.4.2010 (hereinafter referred to as “the EEA mission guidelines”, see annex 7). All missions shall be approved by EEA prior to any purchase of ticket, a hotel reservation or any other cost related to a mission. Travel arrangements must be made on the basis of the most convenient trip (shortest schedule possible in terms of the time schedule from departure to destination) at the best possible price to EEA, according to the provisions of the mission guidelines.

On occasion, staff members may combine a mission with additional leave for personal reasons and/or choose an itinerary other than the place of employment or mission. However, additional costs arising from this are borne by the staff member.

The rules and conditions for the reimbursement of expenses incurred by persons invited by the EEA as interviewees, experts, members of the Management Board and members of other Committees are lay down in the Reimbursement policy for expert meeting expenses adopted by the EEA Executive Director on 1.7.2011 (see annex 8).

The purpose of this call for tenders is to conclude a contract with a travel agency capable of providing the services and handling the number of travel arrangements - mainly flight tickets but also hotel bookings and car rentals for both the EEA staff members and invitees to EEA's meetings as stated below.

The total yearly travel volume of the EEA is estimated to approx. 2,200 travels. The destinations are worldwide whereof 90 % of the travels are within Europe, including Central and Eastern Europe.

The estimated yearly travelling budget amounts to approx. EUR 1,200,000 out of which flight tickets account for the largest percentage.

6.1 Mandatory requirements

The table below describes the required minimum level of services to be provided:

BOOKING TICKETS	
1	Ticketing requests to the travel agency includes the following:
1.1	Air, train, ferry etc... tickets, car rental and accommodation reservations or equivalent
1.2	The travel agency shall provide the lowest price quotation upon requests for destinations worldwide
1.3	Reservations shall be made always at the lowest fare available, incl. any low cost airlines
1.4	Reservations are to be kept on hold for the period the airlines are offering
1.5	Pre-paid tickets (PTAs) to be provided for destinations worldwide
1.6	The use of electronic tickets shall be standard whenever feasible
2	Reservation and ticketing services are to be provided during the EEA working hours from 09:00 to 17:00h, from Monday to Friday
3	The travel agency's corporate credit card is to be used – against a separate fee – when or if the airliner needs a credit card number in order to confirm the reservation

4	Private reservations are to be made available to the EEA staff on equal terms but to be invoiced directly to staff members for payment
5	Arrangements for meetings, conventions, catering and more (booking of meeting facilities, meals, coffee, hotel rooms etc.)
6	The travel agency shall on a regular basis provide the EEA with information on:
6.1	Overview of current air market situation, mainly in Europe (airlines' new destinations, discount fares, special offers, promotions, etc...)
6.2	Airlines' policy changes
6.3	Monthly statistics on travel expenses; breakdowns provided in alignment with the needs of EEA
6.4	Upcoming strikes, disruptions, etc... whenever possible

PAYMENTS

On a monthly basis, an overview of the electronic invoice summary shall be provided as EXCEL spreadsheet, stating the references specified by EEA and the price of each separate booking

For further details on the payment terms please refer to the draft framework contract attached as annex 6 to these tender specifications

ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS

Solutions on direct setting off of CO₂ emissions per booking and amount specified and paid on the monthly payments. A list of projects shall be prepared by the travel agency on an annual basis and EEA will choose from that list the project(s) according which the offsetting is to be carried out

ADMINISTRATION

1	All instructions shall be held in English
2	All communications between the EEA and the travel agency shall be done in English, being the working language at the EEA
3	The travel agency shall appoint a contact person/account manager
4	The travel agency shall be covered by Rejsegaranti / Travel guarantee or equivalent

6.2. Specific dispositions as to the services to be provided

6.2.1 Ticketing requests

6.2.1.1 Issuing tickets for EEA staff going on mission

The travel agency shall advise staff members on the most suitable travel option for their mission, and where applicable, provide additional explanation on the proposed options.

Response to fare inquiries shall be provided by e-mail within 3 (three) hours from the original inquiry, at which time EEA shall receive routing options, if available, and relevant cost quotations.

The travel agency must be able to reserve and issue tickets for all air, rail and boat travel, as requested, at the best possible price (combining the most direct and least expensive routes to achieve cost effectiveness). One quote shall be proposed. If requested, other alternatives have to be provided.

Changes of ticketing/routing shall be dealt with within 3 (three) hours, or in case of urgency, within 1 (one) hour, after EEA's request, including revalidation of the relevant ticket.

Preference shall be given to electronic ticketing when available or applicable (lower costs incurred) and to the scheduled flights (including low fare companies) over charter flights. It is desirable that the travel agency shall also be able to purchase directly low cost tickets for staff members.

The ticket quotation shall clearly mention the following:

1.	A price quote with reference to the final date of issue
2.	Where applicable, the difference between the personal choice of the traveller and the best available offer
3.	Mission order number
4.	Itinerary (detailed flight/train hours of departure and arrival)
5.	Ticket class (economy or business class)
6.	Information on ticket flexibility and related costs regarding the possible change or cancellation
7.	The last deadline date for issuing the ticket

The EEA is currently in a process of developing an in-house IT system for mission. The travel agency shall be able to offer the staff member going on mission the possibility of using an online booking tool as a complement to the IT system developed by the EEA, should the need arise in the future.

6.2.1.2 Arranging accommodation for EEA staff going on mission

The travel agency shall propose suitable hotels to the staff members at the destination of the mission within the limits allowed under the EEA mission guidelines (see annex 7), taking into account convenience (proximity of the mission venue). As a general rule, the travel agency must settle the accommodation costs directly with the hotel and invoice these costs to the EEA. For this purpose, the travel agency shall have at its disposal a broad selection of hotels across Europe and outside Europe, including hotels applying special prices, in addition to a list of suitable accommodation with guaranteed rates up to the limit in the convenient locations that are most visited by EEA staff, for instance Brussels, Luxembourg, Geneva, Paris, London, Lisbon, Vienna, etc...

All information on accommodation shall be provided to the traveller as soon as available by the travel agency and, in any case, within 1 (one) working day from the date of the request.

6.2.1.3 Car rental

If car rental in the place of destination is requested, it shall be ensured through the issuing of vouchers with the most advantageous car rental company operating on the spot.

6.2.1.4 Meetings and events: services for persons travelling on behalf of EEA

EEA organises meetings to which external participants are invited both to its premises in Copenhagen and also to other venues in Europe. Participants come from all of the 33 EEA member countries as well as third countries. The conditions for travel and accommodation of the participants are established in the specific rules for the type of meeting and participant (e.g. Management Board, Scientific Committee, Eionet, see annex 8). The number of participants at a meeting may range from 5 to 150 (five to hundred and fifty) persons.

EEA will inform the travel agency in advance of the provisional meeting dates and provide a list of participants. Departure place will vary among the participants. The most important point is that the ticket must be based on economical rates. If changes are due to a modification of the meeting agendas or to other reasons that may affect all participants, EEA will contact the travel agency and ask to provide suitable alternative flights for all participants. EEA will then inform the participants about the alternative flights and will ask for confirmation.

The travel agency must propose to participants suitable hotels within the limits allowed, taking into account convenience (proximity to the mission venue). For meetings and events in Copenhagen, the travel agency must be able to provide a list of different hotels with which it has negotiated special terms for EEA.

The travel agency must settle the accommodation costs directly with the hotel and invoice these costs to the EEA.

The travel agency shall prepare for each participant, a comprehensive file (electronically) including the following minimum information:

- Flight or other type of transport reservation (electronic ticket or paper ticket);
- Hotel voucher (where applicable) and map of location of the hotel;

- Information regarding online check-in (if applicable);
- Information on public transport at the airport of the destination.

6.2.2 Other services to be provided

6.2.2.1 Information on disruptions and re-routing

In all cases, the travel agency must inform the traveller and the travel organiser immediately on any changes in the scheduled flight times and on any significant circumstances that may incur changes, e.g. planned strikes or other disruptions. In case of any incidents relating to a mission, the travel agency must deal with re-routing, delayed flights and provide the traveller solutions for obtaining connecting flights and reaching the target destination in due time.

6.2.2.2 Cancellations / Modifications

In the case of cancellation or modification of a mission, the travel agency will endeavour to minimise any penalties incurred by the EEA. Penalties or any additional charges attributed to a fault of the travel agency cannot be charged to the EEA.

6.2.2.3 Arrangements for meetings, conventions catering and more

The travel agency may be asked to arrange booking of venues and catering for events and meetings in the vicinity of the EEA or in any other location across Europe or outside Europe. In general terms, two alternatives shall be proposed. If requested, other alternatives shall be provided.

Response to booking inquiries shall be provided by e-mail within 1 (one) working day from the original inquiry, at which time the EEA shall receive venue options and relevant cost quotations.

The quotation shall clearly mention the following:

1.	A price quote with reference to the final date of validity
2.	The meeting order number
3.	Venue details (location, capacities, access)
4.	Information on booking flexibility and related costs regarding the possible change or cancellation

6.2.3 Other requirements

6.2.3.1 Working hours

The travel agency must provide the services, including the delivery of tickets and vouchers to the EEA, on working days and at the following times: from Monday to Friday from 09:00 to 17:00 (with the exception of EEA holidays, see annex 9). During working hours, the travel agency staff must be available by telephone and by e-mail. The travel agency must provide a dedicated team to serve the EEA and also a direct telephone line and e-mail address to be used for

communication with the EEA and its staff members. The travel agency shall guarantee enough resources to support via telephone and e-mail the volume of activities during normal working hours, for each EEA working day. Therefore, replacement of staff for any reason (sickness, holiday, training, etc...) must be foreseen by the travel agency.

6.2.3.2 *Travel agency staff*

The travel agency shall ensure that any member of its staff dealing with the EEA travels under this contract has the necessary and sufficient knowledge and training to render the services at the level required. A high level of professionalism and “client-orientation” is required. The staff designated as contact persons for the EEA must have an excellent working knowledge of spoken and written English.

6.2.3.3 *Reporting and statistics*

The travel agency must provide written, detailed monthly reports and statistics reflecting the services provided to the EEA under the duration of the framework service contract. Statistics must be comprehensive and easily understandable, such as by type of services, by destination, by means of transport used, by country and other breakdowns that may be requested. All reports must be in English.

7. **Type and volume of contract**

The successful tenderer will be awarded a framework contract with the EEA for an initial period of 24 (twenty-four) months, starting from the date of signature, with the possibility of one renewal for another period of 24 (twenty-four) months. The services will be implemented through order forms depending on the EEA’s demand. Based on the EEA’s current level of activities the value of the contract is estimated at a total of EUR 5,800,000.00 over a maximum period of 48 (forty-eight) months covering all services.

The place of performance of the services shall be at the contractor’s premises.

8. **Price**

Tenderers are required to quote prices for the services to be provided as follows:

- Prices must be quoted as a fee per booking;
- Pre-paid ticketing advice (PTA) fees, hotel and car rental reservation fees, and the fees for use of the travel agency’s corporate credit card (as described in section 6 above) are to be specified as **separate fees**;
- Prices quoted must be **all-inclusive** (i.e. the entire service provider’s costs including, postage, management and administrative costs) and expressed in **euro** including for tenderers established in countries that are not part of the Eurozone. For tenderers in countries that do not belong to the Eurozone, the price quoted may not be revised in line with exchange rate movements. It is for the tenderers to select an exchange rate and assume the risks or the benefits deriving from any variation;

- Prices quoted must be fixed and not subject to revision for the whole duration of the contract;
- No additional expenses incurred in the performance of the services will be reimbursed separately by EEA;

Under Articles 3 and 4 of the Protocol on the Privileges and Immunities of the European Communities and the Headquarters Agreement between the Agency and the Government of Denmark of 17 August 1995, the Agency is exempt from all charges, taxes and dues, including value added tax (VAT); such charges may not therefore be included in the calculation of the price quoted; the **VAT amount must be indicated separately**.

The costs incurred in preparing and submitting tenders are borne by the tenderers and cannot be reimbursed.

9. Criteria

9.1. Exclusion criteria

9.1.1. Exclusion from participation and award in the procurement procedure

To be eligible to participate in this contract award procedure, tenderers must not be in any of the exclusion situations referred to in Articles 106 and 107 of the financial rules applicable to the general budget of the European Union³.

9.1.2. Evidence to be provided by the tenderers

When submitting their bids, each tenderer (including any subcontractor or any member of a consortium) must provide a declaration on their honour in accordance with the form attached as annex 2, duly signed and dated, stating that they are not in any of the situations mentioned under paragraph 9.1.1 above.

The tenderer to whom the contract is to be awarded will be required, prior to the signature of the contract, to provide the evidence specified in the penultimate paragraph of the declaration of honour mentioned above (see annex 2).

9.2. Selection criteria

9.2.1. Legal capacity

Any tenderer is required to prove that he is authorised to perform the contract under national law, as evidenced by inclusion in a trade or professional register, or a sworn declaration or certificate, membership of a specific organisation, express authorisation, or entry in the VAT register.

To that effect, each service provider (including subcontractor(s) or any member of a consortium) is required to submit a legal entity form (see annex 3) duly filled out and signed, accompanied by a copy of inscription in trade register and/or a copy of inscription in VAT register, where

³ Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 966/2012 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 25.10.2012, OJEU L 298/1 of 26.10.2012.

applicable. However the subcontractor(s) shall not be required to fill out or provide those documents when the services provided represent less than 20 % of the contract.

9.2.2. Economic and financial capacity

Evidence of economic and financial capacity shall be furnished by one **(or more)** of the following documents:

- appropriate statements from banks or evidence of professional risk indemnity insurance;
OR
- the presentation of balance sheets or extracts from balance sheets for at least the last 2 (two) years for which account have been closed, where publication of the balance sheet is required under the company law of the country in which the economic operator is established; OR
- a statement of overall turnover and turnover concerning the services covered by the contract during the last 2 (two) financial years.

If, for some exceptional reason, which the EEA considers justified, a tenderer is unable to provide the references requested above, he may prove his economic and financial capacity by any other means which the EEA considers appropriate.

An economic operator may, where appropriate and for a particular contract, rely on the capacities of other entities, regardless of the legal nature of the links which it has with them. It must in that case prove to the EEA that it will have at its disposal the resources necessary for performance of the contract, for example by producing an undertaking on the part of those entities to place those resources at its disposal.

9.2.3. Technical and professional capacity

Tenderers should show their degree of technical and professional capacity to carry out the requested tasks by providing information on the criteria described below. If several service providers or subcontractors are involved in the tender, the selection criteria for the technical and professional capacity will be assessed in relation to the combined capacities of the service providers and subcontractors, as a whole, to the extent that service providers or subcontractors put their resources at the disposal of the tenderer for performance of the contract.

Tenderers shall provide the following documentation:

- ***Human resources:***

CVs detailing the educational and professional qualifications of the firm's managerial staff as well as those of the booking agents designated to provide the services indicating the required professional experience as follows:

- Managerial staff: Minimum one CV (contract manager) documenting a minimum of 5 years' relevant experience;
- Persons responsible for providing the services: Minimum 3 CVs for booking agents, with at least one year relevant experience and statement of language skills;

- ***Past contracts:***

Tenderers shall provide details of major contracts awarded to them relevant to the services required by the EEA, indicating the value, dates, brief description of the services provided and

recipients of the services (public or private), under the following two categories: (1) contracts currently undertaken; and (2) contracts that have been undertaken over the last 3 (three) years;

- **Travel guarantee**

Tenderers shall provide evidence of affiliation to a travel guarantee scheme that covers travellers in the event of any risks of suspension or interruption of business or activities of the travel agency.

- **Quality control:**

Tenderers shall provide details of any quality assurance accreditation that they hold. If no accreditation held, tenderers shall provide an outline of any quality assurance policy specifying status of implementation, and details of any quality assurance accreditations for which they have applied.

9.3. Award criteria

The assessment method that will be used to determine the choice of the tender will be based on the criteria given below, on the basis of the economically most advantageous tender in terms of:

- The quality of the tender (Technical merit – TM)
- The financial value of the tender (Price –P)

9.3.1. Technical merit (TM) (max. 60, min. 42 points)

Tenders will be evaluated following the award criteria and weights outlined in the table below, producing a total potential score of 60 points.

Tenderers shall elaborate on all criteria referred to below in order to score as many points as possible. The mere repetition of mandatory requirements set out in these tender specifications, without going into details or without giving any added value will only result in a low score. If essential elements of these tender specifications are not expressly addressed in the tender, the EEA may decide to give a zero mark for the relevant quality criterion.

No	Award criteria	Maximum points (60)	Minimum points (42)
1	<p><i>Understanding of the scope of the contract and quality of the contract implementation proposal:</i></p> <p>Tenders will be evaluated in terms of their understanding of the objectives of the call for tenders and in terms of the proposed approach and tools to be used for the provision of the required services:</p>		

No	Award criteria	Maximum points (60)	Minimum points (42)
1	<p>Tenders shall describe (max. 5 A4 pages):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - how the contract implementation will be organised in order to guarantee efficiency and quality of the provision of services beyond the mandatory requirements listed under section 6.1 above (max. 15 points); - The ability to proactively provide solutions to optimize travel time and improve cost efficiency (please provide at least 1 example) (max. 15 points); - Broad selection of hotels across the 33 EEA member countries and the availability of lists of preferred hotels (max. 5 points); - The ability to provide special hotel rates to EEA (max. 5 points). 	40	30
2	<p>Management approach:</p> <p>Tenders will be evaluated in terms of organisation, flexibility and service orientation (e.g. opening hours, service level, assistance, response times, ability to adapt to changing circumstances, alert systems for travel disruptions and contingency plans, etc...), as documented in a short presentation (max. 5 A4 pages)</p>	10	6
3	<p>Environmental policy:</p> <p>Description of the environmental policy of the tenderer specifying the status of implementation and description of mechanisms and possible projects for direct offsetting of CO₂ emissions (maximum 2 A4 pages)</p>	10	6

Only tenders which obtain the indicated minimum number of points, both for each award criterion and in total, will be considered for the next stage, which involves determining the financial value of the tender (price index) and for the final assessment.

9.3.2. Price (P) (max. 40 points)

Tenderers are requested to submit a financial offer for the following services:

Fee for request for quotation specified as separate fees below **(excl. CO₂ fee)***:

1. Pre-paid ticketing advice fees (28 %) *
2. Accommodation reservation fees (25 %) *
3. Car reservation fees (2 %) *
4. Fees for the use of the travel agency's corporate credit card (5 %) *
5. Fees per participant for arranging travel and accommodation (18 %)

6. Fees for arranging booking of meeting room/facilities and catering (2 %)
7. Fee charged for the off-setting of Co2 per full booking (**excl. booking fee**) (20 %)

For that purpose tenderer shall use the price quotation template attached in annex 5 to these tender specifications. Tenderers shall bear in mind that all fields are compulsory and non-compliance will lead to exclusion of the tender from the award process.

For each category above, tenders meeting all mandatory requirements including the minima for technical merit will score points in function of the following formula $P_s = (P_{s_{min}} / P_{s_0}) \times 40 \times$ weight percentage, where

P_s = score for price of service,

$P_{s_{min}}$ = the lowest price offered amongst the tenders received,

P_{s_0} = the price of the tender being considered

The Price (P) is the sum of the 7 P_s .

9.3.3. Final assessment

A framework contract will be awarded to the tenderer whose tender achieves the highest total score for technical merit and price (TM + P). Should tenders obtain the same final score and tie for first place, the winning tender will be decided on the basis of the highest score achieved for price.

10. Performance

Competence in both selection and award criteria must be maintained throughout the framework contract. Should the contractor fail to do this during the validity of the framework contract, EEA reserve the right to refuse any booking agent if performance is not satisfactory and/or to choose another vender from the tenders.

11. Environmental Considerations

The EEA runs a certified environmental management system (EMAS) and aims to minimise the environmental impact of all its activities, including those carried out under contract. The future contractor will, therefore, be requested to consider the EEA environmental management guidelines in the implementation of the contract, in particular, those relating to business travel, electronic means of communication, paper and energy consumption. Further information on the EMAS system can be found on the EEA homepage:

<http://www.eea.europa.eu/documents/emas>.

Moreover, it is strongly recommended that tenders are submitted in an environmentally friendly way, e.g., by choosing a simple and clear structure (list of contents and consecutive page numbering), double-sided printing, limiting attachments to what is required in the technical specifications (no additional material) and avoiding plastic folders or binders.

12. Timetable

The timetable for this call for tenders and signature of the resulting contract is as follows:

	Date	Comments
Call for tenders launch date	16.12.2013	Dispatch of the contract notice to the Office of Publication
Deadline for requests for clarifications	28.1.2013	
Last date on which clarifications are issued by EEA	31.1.2014	
Time limit for submission of tenders	7.2.2014	At 16:00 in case of hand delivery or 23:59 in case of mail delivery
Opening session	14.2.2014	At 10:00 local time in the EEA premises
Evaluation of tenders	From 17.2.2014 to 26.2.2014	Estimated
Award decision and notification of evaluation results	28.2.2014	Estimated
Contract signature	17.3.2014	Estimated
Implementation of contract		Immediately after contract signature

13. Annexes

Annex 1: Tender submission form

Annex 2: Declaration on exclusion criteria

Annex 3: Legal entity form

Annex 4: Financial identification form

Annex 5: Price quotation

Annex 6: Draft framework contract and draft order form

Annex 7: EEA mission guidelines

Annex 8: EEA reimbursement policy for expert meeting expenses

Annex 9: EEA holidays