

SERVICE CONTRACT NOTICE

Development of Integrated National Qualifications System

Republic of Serbia

1. Publication reference

EuropeAid/138043/IH/SER/RS

2. Procedure

Restricted

3. Programme title

Annual Action Programme for Serbia (2014)

4. Financing

Financing agreement

5. Contracting Authority

The Government of the Republic of Serbia represented by the Ministry of Finance, Department for Contracting and Financing of EU Funded Programmes (CFCU), Belgrade, Serbia

CONTRACT SPECIFICATION

6. Nature of contract

Fee-based

7. Contract description

The purpose of this contract is to assist Republic of Serbia to support further development and implementation of an integrated National Qualifications Framework (NQF) system, with specific focus on:

- Building capacities of relevant institutions (primarily NQF Agency and councils) for the development, implementation and management of the National Qualifications Framework system,
- Developing and promoting different models of social partnerships between institutions and social partners in order to make qualification development more relevant,
- Preparing a sustainable methodology for creating sector profiles, and supporting the development of a number of sector profiles and qualifications standards
- Developing and piloting a system for recognition of prior learning, including support for the drafting of relevant secondary legislation.

8. Number and titles of lots

One lot only

9. Maximum budget

EUR 1,500,000

10. Scope for additional services

The Contracting Authority may, at its own discretion, extend the project in duration and/or scope subject to the availability of funding up to the estimated amount of approximately 1,500,000. Any extension of the contract would be subject to satisfactory performance by the Contractor.

CONDITIONS OF PARTICIPATION

11. Eligibility

Participation is open to all natural persons who are nationals of and legal persons (participating either individually or in a grouping – consortium - of tenderers) which are effectively established in a Member State of the European Union or in an eligible country or territory as defined under the Regulation (EU) N°236/2014 establishing common rules and procedures for the implementation of the Union's instruments for external action (CIR) for the applicable Instrument under which the contract is financed (see also heading 29 below) . Participation is also open to international organisations.

Please be aware that after the United Kingdom's withdrawal from the EU, the rules of access to EU procurement procedures of economic operators established in third countries will apply to candidates or tenderers from the United Kingdom depending on the outcome of negotiations. In case such access is not provided by legal provisions in force at the time of contract award, candidates or tenderers from the United Kingdom could be rejected from the procurement procedure.

12. Candidature

All eligible natural and legal persons (as per item 11 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. All members of a consortium (i.e., the leader and all other members) are jointly and severally liable to the Contracting Authority.

The participation of an ineligible natural or legal person (as per item 11) 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.

13. Number of applications

No more than one application can be submitted by a natural or legal person whatever the form of participation (as an individual legal entity or as leader or member of a consortium submitting an application). In the event that a natural or legal person submits more than one application, all applications in which that person has participated will be excluded.

14. Shortlist alliances prohibited

Any tenders received from tenderers comprising firms other than those mentioned in the short-

listed application forms will be excluded from this restricted tender procedure unless prior approval from the Contracting Authority has been obtained (see Practical Guide – PRAG - 2.4.3.). Short-listed candidates may not form alliances or subcontract to each other for the contract in question.

15. Grounds for exclusion

As part of the application form, candidates must submit a signed declaration, included in the standard application form, to the effect that they are not in any of the exclusion situations listed in Section 2.3.3 of the PRAG.

16. Sub-contracting

Subcontracting is allowed up to 20% of the contract value.

17. Number of candidates to be short-listed

On the basis of the applications received, between 4 and 8 candidates will be invited to submit detailed tenders for this contract. If the number of eligible candidates meeting the selection criteria is less than the minimum of 4, the Contracting Authority may invite the candidates who satisfy the criteria to submit a tender.

PROVISIONAL TIMETABLE

18. Provisional date of invitation to tender

July 2018

19. Provisional commencement date of the contract

January 2019

20. Initial period of implementation of tasks

24 months

SELECTION AND AWARD CRITERIA

21. Selection criteria

The following selection criteria will be applied to candidates. In the case of applications submitted by a consortium, these selection criteria will be applied to the consortium as a whole unless specified otherwise. The selection criteria will not be applied to natural persons and single-member companies when they are sub-contractors.

- 1) **Economic and financial capacity of candidate** (based on item 3 of the application form). In case of candidate being a public body, equivalent information should be provided. The reference period which will be taken into account will be the last three years for which accounts have been closed.
 - a) The average annual turnover of the candidate for the last three years for which accounts have been closed must be at least 750,000 EUR; and
 - b) Current ratio (current assets/current liabilities) in the last three years for which accounts have been closed must be at least 1. In case of a consortium this criterion must be fulfilled by each

member.

2) **Professional capacity of candidate** (based on items 4 and 5 of the application form). The reference period which will be taken into account will be the last five years from submission deadline.

a) At least three (3) permanent staff currently work for the candidate in the fields related to this contract.

3) **Technical capacity of candidate** (based on items 5 and 6 of the application form). The reference period which will be taken into account will be the last five years from submission deadline.

a) The candidate has provided services under at least two projects (with the portion of the project carried out by the legal entity being at least EUR 500,000) in the field of support for development and/or implementation of a national qualification framework system, including development and/or implementation of system for recognition of prior learning in at least one of the projects, which was implemented at any moment during the reference period.

This means that the project the candidate refers to could have been started or completed at any time during the indicated period but it does not necessarily have to be started and completed during that period, nor implemented during the entire period. Candidates/tenderers are allowed to refer either to projects completed within the reference period (although started earlier) or to projects not yet completed. In the first case the project will be considered in its whole if proper evidence of performance is provided (statement or certificate from the entity which awarded the contract, proof of final payment). In case of projects still on-going only the portion satisfactorily completed during the reference period although started earlier will be taken into consideration. This portion will have to be supported by documentary evidence (similarly to projects completed) also detailing its value. If a candidate/tenderer has implemented the project in a consortium, the percentage that the candidate/tenderer has successfully completed must be clear from the documentary evidence, together with a description of the nature of the services provided if the selection criteria relating to the pertinence of the experience have been used.

Previous experience which caused breach of contract and termination by a Contracting Authority shall not be used as reference.

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 Contracting Authority that it will have at its disposal the resources necessary for performance of the contract, for example by producing a commitment on the part of those entities to place those resources at its disposal. Such entities, for instance the parent company of the economic operator, must respect the same rules of eligibility - notably that of nationality – and must fulfil the same relevant selection criteria as the economic operator. With regard to technical and professional criteria, an economic operator may only rely on the capacities of other entities where the latter will perform the works or services for which these capacities are required. With regard to economic and financial criteria, the entities upon whose capacity the tenderer relies, become jointly and severally liable for the performance of the contract.

If more than 8 eligible candidates meet the above selection criteria, the relative strengths and weaknesses of the applications of these candidates must be reexamined to identify the eight best candidates. The only factors which will be taken into consideration during this re-examination are:

1) Total number of the reference projects found eligible under point 21.3 and in case of

equality on this criterion, then:

2) The value of the eligible part (the portion carried out by the candidate) of the projects found eligible under criterion 21.3.

22. Award criteria

Best price-quality ratio.

APPLICATION

23. Deadline for receipt of applications

15:00 h Central European Time on 4th June 2018

Any application received by the Contracting Authority after this deadline will not be considered.

24. Application format and details to be provided

Applications must be submitted using the standard application form, the format and instructions of which must be strictly observed. The application form is available from the following Internet address:

<http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/prag/annexes.do?chapterTitleCode=B>

The application must be accompanied by a declaration of honour on exclusion and selection criteria using the template available from the following Internet address:

<http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/prag/annexes.do?chapterTitleCode=A>

Any additional documentation (brochure, letter, etc.) sent with an application will not be taken into consideration.

25. How applications may be submitted

Applications must be submitted in English exclusively to the Contracting Authority in a sealed envelope:

- EITHER by recorded delivery (official postal service) to :

Ministry of Finance, Government of the Republic of Serbia
Department for Contracting and Financing of EU Funded Programmes (CFCU)
Division for Tender Evaluation and Contracting
3-5, Sremska Str, V floor, office 502, Belgrade, 11 000
Republic of Serbia

In this case, the delivery record makes proof of compliance with the time-limit for receipt.

- OR hand delivered (including courier services) directly to the Contracting Authority in return for a signed and dated receipt to:

Ministry of Finance, Government of the Republic of Serbia
Department for Contracting and Financing of EU Funded Programmes (CFCU)
Division for Tender Evaluation and Contracting
3-5, Sremska Str, V floor, office 502, Belgrade, 11 000
Republic of Serbia

In this case, the acknowledgment of receipt makes proof of compliance with the time-limit for receipt.

The Contract title and the Publication reference (see item 1 above) must be clearly marked on the envelope containing the application and must always be mentioned in all subsequent correspondence with the Contracting Authority.

Applications submitted by any other means will not be considered.

By submitting an application candidates accept to receive notification of the outcome of the procedure by electronic means. Such notification shall be deemed to have been received on the date upon which the contracting authority sends it to the electronic address referred to in the application.

26. Alteration or withdrawal of applications

Candidates may alter or withdraw their applications by written notification prior to the deadline for submission of applications. No application may be altered after this deadline.

Any such notification of alteration or withdrawal shall be prepared and submitted in accordance with Item 25. The outer envelope (and the relevant inner envelope if used) must be marked 'Alteration' or 'Withdrawal' as appropriate.

27. Operational language

All written communications for this tender procedure and contract must be in English.

28. Date of publication of prior information notice

4th May 2016

29. Legal basis

Regulation (EU) N°236/2014 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 March 2014 laying down common rules and procedures for the implementation of the Union's instruments for financing external action and Regulation (EU) 231/2014 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 March 2014 establishing an Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance (IPA II)

30. Additional information

When filling in the standard Application Form, and in particular items 3, 4, 5 and 6 therein, candidates must provide all information necessary to allow the Short-list Panel to assess their compliance with the selection criteria under points 21.1), 21.2) and 21.3) above.

Particularly, Candidates are strongly recommended to provide clear description of the overall services contract and full contract details in item 6 of the standard Application Form, sections "Detailed description of project".

In the section "Type of services provided" candidates are requested to separately, list only those activities which have been carried out by the candidates themselves, excluding activities carried out e.g. by other members of a previously formed consortium (who are not part of the application for this tender procedure. Completion dates of projects or of relevant projects components (see criterion 21.3) must be clearly stated.

Opening hours of the Contracting Authority for the submission of applications: 08:00 – 15:00 Central European Time.

Please note that, in order to ensure efficient electronic correspondence with the Contracting Authority, candidates must provide e-mail addresses capable of receiving e-mails of at least 20 MB (twenty Megabytes), or else specify their inbox size.

Applicants may submit questions in writing to the address defined under point 25 of this Contract Notice or to the e-mail address cfcu.questions@mfin.gov.rs up to 15 days before the deadline for submission of tenders, specifying the publication reference and the contract title.

The Contracting Authority will publish answers to all received questions on the EuropeAid website at the latest 5 days before the deadline for submission of applications and has no obligation to provide any further clarifications after this date.

Any tenderer seeking to arrange individual meetings with the Contracting Authority and/or the government of the partner country and/or the European Commission concerning this contract during the application period may be excluded from the application procedure.

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