****

**COMMONWEALTH SECRETARIAT**

**MARLBOROUGH HOUSE, PALL MALL, LONDON SW1Y 5HX**

***IN STRICT COMMERCIAL CONFIDENCE***

**Request for Quotations (RFQ)**

**For the provision of an e-tendering system to the Commonwealth Secretariat**

**January 2021**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Secretariat Reference Number:** | **537-2021** |
|  |  |
| **Return Date:** | **Return Date – Noon on 15th February 2021** |
|  |  |
| **Estimated Contract Start:**  | **April 2021** |
|  |  |
| **Contact Email:** | **procurement@commonwealth.int** |

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1. Introduction
	1. The Commonwealth Secretariat (“the Secretariat”) is an international organisation established by Agreed Memorandum, which is given privileges and immunities under the domestic law of the United Kingdom by the Commonwealth Secretariat Act 1966 (as amended by the International Organisations Act 2005). Under this legislation, the Secretariat is not subject to UK jurisdiction and enforcement. Further information on the Secretariat can be found at: <http://thecommonwealth.org/>
	2. This status has an impact on some of our standard terms and conditions. In particular, we draw your attention to our dispute resolution clause, which refers disputes to the exclusive jurisdiction of the Commonwealth Secretariat Arbitration Tribunal (CSAT). The 8 members of the Tribunal are selected by the Board of Governors and come from Commonwealth member countries. CSAT is located in London, United Kingdom. Information about CSAT, including its governing statute and procedure are available on its website at <http://thecommonwealth.org/tribunal>.
	3. The Secretariat implements decisions agreed by 54 Heads of Government and Ministers through advocacy, consensus–building, information sharing, analysis, technical assistance, capacity-building, and advice on policy development.
2. Purpose
	1. The Secretariat wishes to find and appoint a suitable supplier for the provision of a web-based e-tendering system to the Commonwealth Secretariat. The appointed supplier shall be awarded a contract that shall be effective for up to three years.
	2. See specification in Section 7- Specification of Requirements for details of the goods and support services required.

# Quote Timeline

* 1. Please note the following timeline may be subject to change if required.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Activity** | **Date** |
| Request for quotes (RFQ) published | 18th January 2021 |
| Clarification questions received from potential suppliers by | 5pm on 1st February 2021 |
| Responses to clarification questions published by the Secretariat on its website[[1]](#footnote-1) by  | 5pm on 5th February 2021 |
| RFQ submission closing date | Noon on 15th February 2021 |
| Presentations | w/c 1st March |
| Notification of intention to Award  | March 2021 |
| Contract Start Date  | April 2021 |

**NOTE:** The above timetable is indicative at the time of publishing this RFQ. This timetable may be subject to change.

1. Instructions to Bidders
	1. Bidders must submit all documents as set out in Section 8 Part1 – Part 3 no later than the return date of **12:00 (Noon) on 15th February 2021.**
	2. The quote documents are to be returned **by email only** to the Commonwealth Secretariat to:

Email: Procurement@commonwealth.int

**NOTE:** The file must be no more than 35MB per email.

* 1. Unless indicated otherwise, all prices should be quoted in Pounds Sterling. Prices quoted should exclude VAT but must indicate clearly where VAT is applicable and where items might be zero-rated.
	2. The bidder must ensure that they have all the information required for the preparation of the quote submission and that they are satisfied about the correct interpretation of terminology used in this documentation. The bidder must also ensure that they are fully conversant with the nature and extent of the obligations should the quote be accepted.
	3. Quotes are to be valid for a minimum of **90 days** from the closing date for the submission of the quotes.
	4. The Commonwealth Secretariat reserves the right to cancel the procurement at any time during the process and not to award a contract as a result of this procurement process.
	5. The procurement process will be conducted to ensure that responses are evaluated fairly to ascertain the most qualified and economically competitive quotes. The Secretariat will use the evaluation criteria described below to determine if the Bidder qualifies.
	6. Bidders shall bear all costs in completing a quote submission.
	7. Bidders shall not disclose details of the RFQ to third parties without prior agreement from an authorised officer of the Commonwealth Secretariat.
	8. Bidders are required to submit transparent pricing with no hidden costs or charges.
	9. All queries must be in writing via the email address procurement@commonwealth.int
	10. Prior to commencing formal evaluation, quote responses received will be checked to ensure they are fully compliant with all the instructions of this procurement and clarification may be sought with regard to minor non-compliances. Non-compliant quotes may be rejected by the Secretariat without further follow up. Only quotes which are deemed by the Secretariat to be fully compliant will proceed to evaluation.
	11. The Secretariat will carry out an evaluation of the quotes received using the weighted criteria method as described in section below. Following both stages of evaluation the Secretariat will select a preferred bidder which will be taken forward to contract award.
	12. The Secretariat reserves the right to appoint a reserve preferred bidder which the Secretariat would take forward to contract award if any contract negotiations with the preferred bidder are unsuccessful.
	13. By submitting a response, the bidder is agreeing to be bound by the terms of this RFQ and the Secretariat’s terms and conditions save as in relation to those areas of the Contract specifically highlighted by completing the Legal Comments Table.
	14. By taking part in this competition all bidders commit to the following:
* Bidders certify that they have not canvassed or solicited any officer or employee of the Secretariat in connection with this tender submission and that no person employed or acting on behalf of the bidder has done any such act.
* To help achieve greater transparency in how the Secretariat spends public funds and to help deliver better value for money, bidders acknowledge that should they be successful certain information, except for any information which is exempt from disclosure, will be published on the Secretariat’s procurement website: <http://thecommonwealth.org/procurement> The information published may include (as an example): contract title, successful bidder name, duration of contract.
* The CSAT shall have exclusive jurisdiction to settle any dispute or claim that arises out of or in connection with this Procurement (including non-contractual disputes or claims).

1. Contract Management
	1. The Secretariat will actively manage the contract by appointing a Contract Manager who will be responsible for all aspects of the agreement and will be the point of communication between the Secretariat and successful bidder. The successful bidder will be informed in writing of any change in responsibilities.
	2. The successful bidder is required to appoint and inform the Contract Manager of the person who is to be their account manager, who will be their point of communication and be authorised to speak on their behalf. The Secretariat’s Contract Manager must be informed in writing of any changes in the successful bidder’s responsibilities.
	3. The successful bidder shall encourage and shall deal promptly, reasonably, efficiently and courteously with comments and criticisms arising from the operation of the services. Feedback shall be managed via the Secretariat’s Contract Manager. A record is to be kept of all comments and the resulting actions. The Contractor shall notify the Secretariat of any serious complaints as soon as it is reasonably practicable.
	4. The successful bidder shall maintain appropriate records and provide the Secretariat with the agreed information and data, when requested, to monitor performance. In the event of an unsatisfactory level of quality being sustained, the successful bidder will be notified of the defaults and the time by which they must be rectified. If performance remains unsatisfactory, the agreement may be terminated.
	5. The successful bidder shall be responsible for invoicing the Secretariat, in accordance with the Terms and Conditions of the contract.
2. Evaluation

## Evaluation Weightings

* 1. **Quality 70%**
* Technical Questionnaire
	1. **Price 30%**
* The lowest price bid shall be awarded the full points, all other bids shall be awarded a percentage from the benchmark. E.g. (lowest price/other bid)\*weighting = Score.

## Evaluation Process

Part 1: Bidder Details

The scoring methodology that will be applied is as follows:

* 1. **Information only** – the information provided will not be scored, but failure to provide it may result in the RFQ submission being disqualified from the procurement process.

Part 2: Technical Questionnaire

Part 2A: Technical Questionnaire Pass/Fail

6.4Pass/Fail– as indicated in the request for quotation documentation. Where a bidder fails a pass/fail question, their quotation will be excluded from further evaluation process and the bidder will end participation in this procurement exercise.

Part 2 B: Technical Questionnaire Scored - 70%

* 1. The following scoring mechansim will be used to score each question in this section:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Score | Description |
| 0 | Does not meet the specification or has not responded to the question |
| 1 | Poor Fit - Meets some of the specification, but is missing in most areas |
| 2 | Low Fit – Meets most of the specification, but is missing in areas |
| 3 | Fit – Meets the specification as required |
| 4 | Good Fit – Meets all of the specification well and exceeds expectations in some areas |
| 5 | Excellent Fit – Exceeds expectations in most or all areas |

* 1. The following formula will be applied for each question:
* Points Scored ÷ Points Available × % weighting
	1. The scores for each of the questions will be added to give a total Technical/Quality Score
	2. Unanswered questions or sections that are left blank shall be awarded a 0.

Part 3 - Commercial Criteria – 30%

* 1. Please refer to the RFQ - Pricing Schedule for a full breakdown of the costs required.

**Part 4 - Presentation Brief**

Following the evaluation of the Technical Questionnaire and Commercial, up to top 3 scoring bidders will be invited to give an online/virtual presentation of their proposed solution to the evaluation panel.

|  |
| --- |
| **Presentation Brief** |
| The presentation must include, but does not need to be limited to, the following elements lasting a maximum of 90 minutes: * Bidders shall present the solution relating to their formal offer, the pricing in Part 3 of their submission as well as any other clarification questions which may have been asked following written quote evaluation by the Secretariat.
* Bidders shall provide a description of the project team with their roles and responsibilities defined.
* Bidders will describe what they will require from the Secretariat in order to ensure the successful delivery of the project.
* Question & Answer session
 |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Please confirm your ability/willingness to give a presentation based on the brief above at your own expense, if requested to do so by the Secretariat.  | Yes/No  |

Presentations will be used to clarify top scoring bidder’s submission and will not carry any weightings in its own right. It will be used however to moderate the submission (either positively or negatively).

**Decision to award**

Following evaluation of quotes received, in accordance with the evaluation process set out in this RFQ, the bidder who offers the best value for money submission may be awarded a Contract.

Please note, the successful bidder will be checked for their Equifax Credit Score. Should a bidder fail the credit score, the Secretariat will be entitled to commence negotiations with the second preferred bidder subject to that bidder having passed the Equifax Credit Score and so forth. Should the bidder ranked first decline to accept a Contract, then it will be offered to the next ranked bidder until it has been accepted.

# Specification of Requirements for an e-tendering system

1. **Background to the Requirement**

The Secretariat is an International Organisation (HQ based in London) and is governed by its own internal public procurement rules, which are audited on a regular basis to ensure equivalence to world class standards. The Secretariat is not required to adhere to UK/EU public procurement legislation but it must respect its own internal procedures which are based on international law. The Secretariat advertises tender requirements on its website (https://thecommonwealth.org/procurement) and manages the procurement process through a dedicated procurement email inbox (procurement@commonwealth.int)

The Secretariat now requires a tender management service which will provide a secure, competitive tendering environment from creation & publication of notice of opportunity through to award of contract with an option to contract manage online the awarded contract.

The Secretariat’s current buyer profile can be found at: <https://thecommonwealth.org/procurement>

The Secretariat’s procurement team has been established for a number of years. Over time, the team has grown to four roles. This small central team of CIPS1 qualified procurement professionals manage the sourcing of strategic contracts of the Secretariat as well as monitoring low-cost contracts across the organisation which were sourced by divisional staff. There are in total approximately 200+ staff engaged by the Secretariat, of whom many may be required (at some stage of their career) to call-off small value purchases against established organisational framework agreements or to manage contracts.

The key outcomes expected from automating procurement and contract management processes are to drive greater control of expenditure, deliver savings and embed a more rigorous compliance culture; all of which will support the Secretariat to deliver its core objectives and deliver efficiency gains.

An e-contract management system is also needed to record all the contract administration and management across the Secretariat in order to have a central repository of contracts to identify underperforming contracts/suppliers and mitigate risks as early as possible.

The contract management system would enable contract managers across the Secretariat to have one place for managing contract administration: day to day supplier queries, communications and engagement; informal and formal performance monitoring and feedback into master performance reviews at service review meetings; capturing performance against KPIS and SLAs set in the contract and variations to these over the life of the contract; mobilisation & transition, performance monitoring & management, service improvement, value management / re-negotiation, benchmarking & review, decommissioning / exit management.

## Scope of the Requirement

The Commonwealth Secretariat underwent recently an independent review of its procurement function and is now in the process of implementing a number of recommendations from this review. The key recommendations relevant for this procurement exercise are:

Automation of procurement tendering and contract management processes through the implementation of a web-based e- tendering and e-contract management system

Training, across the Secretariat, supporting the roll out of the new system

1. **Functionality**

The Secretariat requires the e-tendering system to deliver the following functionality:

1. ability to support public tendering for the procurement of specialised goods and services from the point when the Secretariat issues a notice of opportunity through exchange of procurement documents containing the specific procurement to contract award and contract management
2. all tendering information on a single secure site
3. online registration for contracting entities and suppliers
4. online search tools for content within the site
5. open and free of charge access to all bidding documents for registered entities who may be based anywhere in the Commonwealth
6. the ability to register on the site with configurable parameters as agreed with the Secretariat
7. acceptable performance, reliability, stability and compatibility with all modern web browsers
8. support helpdesk available to internal and external users
9. technical training for systems administrators/super users/users, as relevant
10. uniform, online, and free of charge identification and authentication systems for submission of expressions of interest, proposals and tenders
11. confidentiality and assurance of appropriate information security for all submissions, including financial proposals, ensured by the use of encrypted electronic safe boxes
12. online recording tender opening times
13. online evaluation process
14. real time notification and information for tenderers at every stage of a procurement process, including contract award notices
15. ability to export and import data through CSV, XML and/or JSON.
16. ability to download and upload data and resources related to a tender in bulk
17. ability to run a capability/pre-qualification assessment
18. select the correct framework for a further competition
19. run a further competition
20. manage communications with suppliers during further competition
21. audit logs on all transactions
22. easily accessible best practice guides on using the system
23. integration with MS Active Directory for Commonwealth Secretariat staff (for authentication purposes)
24. general system support and maintenance - SLA to be agreed with the Secretariat.

In addition to the above the following are the minimum e-contract management functionality requirements:

1. contract registration and management
2. monitoring of contract performance and deliverables before payments are made
3. management of contract amendments and extensions (e.g., adding documents, editing dates, re-issuing contracts in the portal)
4. unlimited reminders for key contract milestones
5. management of contract completion and final evaluations
6. management of contract performance guarantees (e.g., storing guarantees and being able to review against the stored documents)
7. easily accessible best practice guides on using the system
8. Ability to upload and download documents and resources related to a given Tender process.

Licensing Requirements:

* unlimited internal/external users
* unlimited number of tender boxes
* unlimited contract records

Data Migration and Reporting Requirements:

• free import of all historical contract records once sent to successful supplier in correct format (preferably MS Excel)

• centralised location for the management, review and auditing of all procurement activity and contract records

• customizable reports from the online contract register with the ability to download to file or view online

* data and System hosted on Commonwealth Secretariat Infrastructure or Data domiciled in the Commonwealth
* adherence to the Commonwealth Secretariat’s Data Policy and the ability to download and archive data off the Platform for authorized Commonwealth Secretariat users.
1. **Security**

The system will adhere to the following:

* + confidentiality – protecting information from unauthorised disclosure either due to malice or accident. All information shall be encrypted.
	+ integrity – safeguarding the accuracy and completeness of the information and computer software
	+ availability – ensuring that information and access to time sensitive tender opportunities is available to the Secretariat’s staff and external customers
	+ authenticity – ensuring that only authorised users can access information
	+ legal compliance – ensuring the system complies with international legislative obligations and compliance with ISO 27001; the General Data Protection Regulation (EU) 2016/679, Privacy and Electronic Communications Regulations 2003 and other legislation, as may be internationally relevant.
	+ Availability - appropriate backup, disaster recovery and business continuity services in place to ensure resilience. Availability should be at-least 99.99% uptime.

Any e-tendering portal should be available through standard PC configurations using Windows. Open-source options with no additional software other than a standard browser required, or downloadable software available free of charge through the -tendering portal.

System Security Requirements

In addition to conformity with the Secretariat’s ICT Policies,

* SSL secured site
* Multifactor Authentication to be set up as per access control matrix to be agreed with the Secretariat.
1. Quote Submission Documents (ref: 537-2021)

*Note - Bidders must complete and return all submission documents listed below as part of their quote response:*

**Part 1 – Bidder Details**

**Part 1.1. –Terms and Conditions**

**Part 1.2. – Code of Ethics**

**Part 2 – Technical Questionnaire**

**Part 3 – Pricing Proposal**

**Appendix 1 - Declaration**

## Part 1 – Bidder Details

Please provide details relating to your registered offices, legal status and date of incorporation:

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| *Company Name* |  |  | *Company Registration Number* |   |
| *Company Address* |  |  | *Date of incorporation* |  |
| *Post Code* |  |  | *Authorised Signatory Name* |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| *Contact Name* |  |  | *Job* *Title* |  |
| *Telephone* |  |  | *Email* |  |

**1.1 Terms and Conditions**

Please delete ‘Yes’ / ‘No’ as applicable.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| (a) | Please confirm that your organisation agrees to the Commonwealth Secretariat’s Terms and Conditions. Download by clicking on any of the links below:[Download](http://thecommonwealth.org/sites/default/files/inline/CommonwealthSecretariatTermsandConditionsContract.pdf%22%20%5Ct%20%22_blank)Address: <https://thecommonwealth.org/sites/default/files/inline/CommonwealthSecretariatTermsandConditionsContract_0.pdf>If not, please state reasons and attach proposed Terms and Conditions. | **Yes/No** |

By submitting a response, the bidder is agreeing to be bound by the terms of this RFQ and the Contract save as in relation to those areas of the Contract terms specifically highlighted below or as per alternative terms attached by the bidder. The bidder must submit full details of the unworkable/unacceptable provisions by completing the Legal Comments Table and/or attaching the bidder’s proposer terms and conditions.

**Legal Comments table**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Clause/Paragraph /Schedule** | **Summary of Issue** | **Suggested Revisions** |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |

**1.2 Code of Ethics**

Please delete ‘Yes’ / ‘No’ as applicable.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| (a) | Please confirm that your organisation agrees to and has signed, dated and attached to your responseour Code of Ethics. Download by clicking on the links:Code of Ethics:[Download](https://thecommonwealth.org/sites/default/files/inline/CODE-OF-ETHICS-Nov19.pdf)<https://thecommonwealth.org/sites/default/files/inline/CODE-OF-ETHICS-Nov19.pdf> | **Yes/No** |

**Please note,** if the bidder fails to comply with the above requirements (under 1.1 A and 1.2), their quote will be rejected without further follow up.

## Part 2 – Technical Questionnaire

## Part 2 A – Pass/Fail Criteria

Does your proposed system meet the following?

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Number** | **Question** | **Yes/No** |
| Licensing Requirements | Unlimited internal/external users |  |
|  | Unlimited number of tender boxes through an e-tendering online portal |  |
|  | Unlimited Contract Records through an e-contract management module |  |
| Security Requirements | SSL secured site |  |
|  | Multifactor Authentication for Tender boxes |  |
|  | Data Domicile in the Commonwealth |  |

## Part 2 B Technical Weighted Criteria (70%)

Please answer all questions:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Number  | Question | Question Weighting |
| 1 |  Please describe your solution and how it meets the Secretariat’s requirements, supporting your description by referencing a minimum of two case studies where your solution has been deployed successfully within agreed timescales/to budget at similar sized organisations. Please provide contact details to enable the Secretariat to obtain references. (800 words max) | 50% |
| [insert text 800 words max]**References:**Please provide the contact details of two reference clients (whom you have worked with within the last 18 months). The referees will not be contacted until the final stage of the procurement process. Please provide references from similar international organisations and/or public sector bodies, if possible. Please note, that prior to award, the Secretariat may wish to take up references without further communicating this request to the Bidder.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Referee details** | **Reference 1** | **Reference 2** |
| Company Name |  |  |
| Contact Name |  |  |
| Company Address |  |  |
| Dates of Engagement |  |  |
| Summary description of services provided |  |  |
| Telephone: |  |  |
| Email:  |  |  |

 |
| 2 | Please describe your proposed implementation methodology and an estimated timetable for onboarding the Secretariat’s Procurement Section in the first phase and rest of the relevant Secretariat staff (divisional procurement leads) in phase two. (500 words max) | 10% |
| [insert text 800 words max] |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| 3 | The Secretariat requires a 3-year contract. Please describe the extent of your on-going support services and training that are included in your priced proposal. (500 words max) | 10% |
| [insert text 500 words max] |

## Part 3 – Pricing (30%)

Transparent pricing must be submitted with no hidden costs.

Please complete the Pricing Schedule. Feel free to expand where required.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Subscription Options List for an Unlimited Tender and Contract Manager System** | **Annual List Cost (£) ex VAT** | **Annual List Cost (£) incl. VAT** | **Discounted** **3-year Cost (£) ex VAT** | **Discounted** **3-year Cost (£) incl. VAT** |
| Tender Manager |  |  |  |  |
| Contracts Manager |  |  |  |  |
| *[insert other optional modules if available]* |  |  |  |  |
| *[insert other optional modules if available]* |  |  |  |  |
| *[insert other optional modules if available]* |  |  |  |  |
| **Total Cost:**  |  |  |  |  |
| **Annual Cost:** |  |  |  |  |

# *Appendix 1*

# *DECLARATION*

When you have completed the RFQ, please ensure that:

* You have answered all the questions;
* You have provided all supporting documentation (if necessary); and
* You have read and signed the undertaking below.

**A Partner, Director or authorised signatory, in his/her own name, on behalf of the Bidder must sign the declaration.**

I certify that the information supplied is accurate to the best of my knowledge and that I accept the conditions and undertakings requested in the RFQ. I understand and accept that false information could result in rejection of the quotation. I confirm that neither myself nor any of my colleagues are related to any Secretariat member of staff (includes but not limited to spouse, parent, grandparent, child, grandchild, or sibling) or have any known conflicts of interest that have been undeclared as part of this RFQ process.

By signing and returning this letter, I/we confirm that I/we have not in relation to this opportunity or the RFQ:

1. Entered into any agreement with any other person with the aim of preventing bids being made or as to the fixing or adjusting of the amount of any bid or the conditions on which any bid is made or the elements or contents of any bid;
2. Informed any other person, other than the Commonwealth Secretariat of any confidential information in relation to the project, except where disclosure, in confidence, was necessary for the purposes of preparing the RFQ;
3. Caused or induced any person to enter into such an agreement as is mentioned in paragraphs (a) and (b) above;
4. Committed any offence under applicable anti-bribery or anti money laundering laws and/or regulations;
5. Offered or agreed to pay, give or accept any sum of money, inducement or valuable consideration directly or indirectly to any person for doing or having done or causing or having caused to be done, in relation to any proposed bid, any act or omission;
6. Offered or agreed to pay, give or accept any sum of money, inducement or valuable consideration directly or indirectly to any person bidding for the RFQ, or from any person in relation to this project; or
7. Agreed to undertake work or services for any other person in connection with the project.

Either - I/ we know of no conflict of interest which, if came to be known, would prohibit my firm/me from carrying out this work [or] I would like to declare the following conflict/s of Interest *(please list)*.

|  |
| --- |
|  |

***Declaring any conflicts of interest does not automatically mean your firm’s exclusion from this RFQ process. If you believe the conflicts do not materially affect your ability to deliver this project should your firm be successful, please explain how the conflicts will be managed.***

In this RFQ the word "person" includes any person, body or association, corporate or incorporated and "agreement" includes any arrangement whether formal or informal and whether legally binding or not.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Signature: |  |
| Full Name: |  |
| Telephone No: |  |
| Email address: |  |
| Position in the organisation: |  |
| Date: |  |

1. https://thecommonwealth.org/current-procurement-opportunities [↑](#footnote-ref-1)