



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
DIRECTORATE-GENERAL
TAXATION AND CUSTOMS UNION
Direct taxation, Tax Coordination, Economic Analysis and Evaluation

Economic analysis, evaluation & impact assessment support

Brussels, **23 MAI 2012**
TAXUD/R1/TA Ares (2012) 717736

Subject: Call for tenders TAXUD/2012/AO-02
Provision of evaluation and impact assessment related services

- Replies to questions

Dear Madam, Dear Sir,

You will find in the Annex to this letter the replies to all the questions received up to 22 May 2012.

This letter is being posted on the website of the Directorate-General for Taxation and Customs Union, at this URL address.

http://ec.europa.eu/taxation_customs/common/tenders_grants/tenders/index_en.htm

Questions received subsequently will be answered in further letters which will be placed regularly on the same website. Prospective tenderers are invited to monitor this site attentively.

As mentioned in the invitation letter (ref TAXUD-R1/TA (2012) 277314) published with the tender documents, requests for additional information received less than five working days before the closing date for submission of tenders, i.e. after 21 May 2012, will not be processed.

Yours faithfully,

Jean-Pierre De Laet
Head of Unit

Question no. 1

Our company is potentially interested to participate in the open procedure related to the "Provision of evaluation and impact assessment related services" for which the call for tenders has been downloaded from the DG TAXUD website. Having examined the documents we don't see any restriction related to a potential conflict of interest to participate in this procedure.

Nevertheless, can you please clarify the potential area of conflict of interest you may see in our participation in this call for tenders knowing that our company has participated in the call for tenders related to "TSM2 - TAXUD/2010/AO-13 — provision of services to cover IT service management for the IT systems" and is currently involved in the delivery of ITSM.

Reply

It is up to the tenderer to determine if there could be a potential conflict of interest. If that is the case, the tenderer will have to provide the Commission with evidence of compensatory measures that they commit to take to segregate duties regarding the services and/or products to be provided under TAXUD/2012/AO-02 Provision of evaluation and impact assessment related services, as opposed to the services and/or products provided/to be provided under any contract that the tenderer is bound to with the Commission.

Question no. 2

We have two set of questions regarding the above mentioned tender:

Page 8, section 6. Price:

"Based on the prices per man-day provided for in Annex VI, the tenderer will determine a unique price for the evaluation and impact assessment-related services for an estimated number of 12 studies of 250 man-days on average. This unique price will constitute the upper ceiling for prices charged under any specific contract concluded under this framework contract."

(a) We understand the unique price to be the maximum price, irrespective of the number of days actually necessary to perform specific contracts, is this correct? Will the price charged for a specific assignment be based on 250 days regardless the number of days necessary for the task? Or will the price charged for a specific assignment be based on the unit price provided in Annex VI, and an estimated number of days for each specific contract as set by the Commission or the contractor? All in all, could you please explain how this will work in practice?

Reply

The unique price is the maximum price that can be charged per day for each specific assignment. It represents an average fee based on the contractor's estimation of the mix of manpower needed across the staff categories defined in

annex VI for an average study. The price charged for a specific assignment is based on the unit prices provided in annex VI, and depends on the specific mix of manpower and on the actual number of days necessary to perform the specific study, with as an upper limit the unique price multiplied by the actual number of days necessary to perform this specific study. The Commission does not set the number of days for specific studies; these are an essential part of the contractor's appreciation when submitting the individual offers under the framework contract.

(b) When calculating this unique price, are we to take into account the different staff category fee rates (i.e. in terms of distribution of staff per category for a typical assignment of 250 days)? Should this calculation be presented in the financial proposal?

Reply

Yes, the fee rates for the different staff categories must be specified and presented in the financial proposal.

(c) We also understand that this unique/maximum price taken into account in the price assessment (section 11.2) does not include costs for data or other reimbursable cost, can you please confirm?

Reply

Your assumption is correct.

(d) Lastly, is cost for data or reimbursable costs to be covered within total frame of 4 million euro, once the contract is running?

Reply

The total budget of 4 million euros includes the reimbursable costs for access to the external databases owned by third parties.

Question no. 3

Page 13, point 3. (g):

“tenderer should provide 3 client reference contacts of entities other than the Commission that are making use of services similar to the service requirements of this call for tenders and a description of the evaluation and/or impact assessment-related projects performed for these clients. The references and contact data provided must be relevant to the services in question and they can be consulted and used by the Commission”

Do you mean “other than the Commission, DG TAXUD” or “other than the Commission, all DGs”, i.e. do you require references from other international or national clients?

Reply

The client references relate to entities other than the Commission Directorate-Generals and departments.

Question no. 4

In section 6 of the tender specifications you refer to the cost of access to external databases:

6. Prices

Prices for access to external databases owned by third parties should not be included in the price per man-day as described in the previous paragraph. Such prices will be the subject of separate reimbursement of costs incurred provided that the expenses are directly linked to the services requested under a specific contract concluded under the framework contract and duly justified by invoices issued by the third-party granting access to the database. A provision for access to external databases for a value of EUR 300,000 is also to be included in the financial offer.

Can you, please, clarify if the total budget should be considered as EUR 3 700 000 for the studies and EUR 300 000 for access to external databases? Or do the EUR 300 000 for access to external databases come on top of the total budget of EUR4 000 000 of the contract?

Reply

Please see reply to Question no. 2 (d)

Question no. 5

The specifications defines that the offered price per man-day includes all types of overheads (page 8). It is not clear however whether the overheads are also meant to cover shipment and travel costs and subsistence allowance. The contract templates (Annex 2 and 3) contain provisions on the reimbursement of shipment, travel and subsistence costs. Is our interpretation correct that these costs are additional to the price per man-day offered in our financial bid and that they should not be explicitly covered in our financial bid?

Reply

No, the financial bid must cover shipment, travel costs and subsistence allowances as part of the overheads.

Question no. 6

The first paragraph of section 6 (page 8) mentions four categories of experts. We assume this is a type and should read “three”. Is this assumption correct?

Reply

Your assumption is correct.

Question no. 7

Will the individual requests under this framework contract include a maximum budget for each job, or a calculated number of man-days?

Reply

The Commission neither sets the number of days nor a maximum budget for specific studies in the individual requests; these are an essential part of the contractor's appreciation when submitting the individual offers under the framework contract. The price charged for a specific assignment is based on the unit prices provided in annex VI, and depends on the specific mix of manpower and on the actual number of days necessary to perform the specific study, with as an upper limit the unique price multiplied by the actual number of days necessary to perform this specific study.

Question no. 8

The specified categories of experts all refer to the need of prior experience “in evaluation and/or impact assessment and the type of tasks to be performed” (page 13). Can we include in these categories thematic experts who are experienced in policy analysis and assessment in specific policy areas - but not specifically in evaluation or impact assessment projects?

Reply

The specified categories of experts refer to prior experience "related to evaluation and/or impact assessment and the type of tasks to be performed". Experience in policy analysis and assessment in specific policy areas would qualify as relevant experience if it is useful for the performance of the tasks. The aim of the requirement is to achieve a balanced mix of experts in each category to perform the tasks described in the technical specifications.

Question no. 9

Point 6 of the specifications states that “The total price must cover all expenditure incurred in the performance of the contract including any necessary travel and subsistence costs.”

This implies that the daily rate we are asked to quote for each category of staff should include an allowance for travel and subsistence.

However, the draft Framework Contract included in the tender dossier contains a paragraph (article I.3.4) which suggests that travel, subsistence and shipment expenses shall be reimbursed in addition to the total price. The draft Specific Contract (article III.3.2) also leaves this possibility open. Plus your answer to question no. 2(c) posted on your website confirms the assumption of another bidder that the “unique/maximum price...does not include costs for data or other reimbursable cost”.

Could you please therefore clarify whether the “other reimbursable cost” mentioned in your answer in the website refers to/covers travel and subsistence expenses?

Reply

The financial bid must cover shipment, travel and subsistence costs as part of the overheads, and such costs are therefore part of the total price. Other reimbursable costs can only relate to prices for access to external databases owned by third parties.

Please also refer to the Reply to Question no. 5

Question no. 10

Will you base your price evaluation on the average rate of the Category 1, 2 and 3 experts or will you do a separate evaluation for each category?

Reply

There is no separate evaluation for each category of experts. The basis for the price assessment is the total fee, defined as the unique price per man-day times the average number of man-days per study times the number of studies planned for the total duration of the contract. It is up to the tenderer to define a unique price per man-day based on his assessment of what consists in a balanced team of experts from the different categories defined in annex VI that would be capable of performing the work described in the technical specifications.