REFERENCE: <\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_>

When submitting their tenders, tenderers must follow all instructions, forms, terms of reference, contract provisions and specifications contained in this tender dossier. Failure to submit a tender containing all the required information and documentation within the deadline specified may lead to the rejection of the tender.

How to complete these standard instructions to tenderers.Please insert information between the <> brackets as indicated for each tender procedure. Square brackets [ ] and parts shaded in grey indicate options to choose: they should be deleted when applicable, but should not be modified. All other parts of these standard instructions must be left unchanged. In the final version of the instructions to tenderers, please remember to delete this paragraph, any other text with yellow highlighting and to suppress grey brackets when applicable.

1. **Services to be provided**

The services required by the contracting authority are described in the terms of reference. They are set out in Annex II to the draft contract, which forms Part B of this tender dossier.

1. **Timetable**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **DATE** | **TIME\*** |
| **Deadline for requesting clarification from the contracting authority** | < Simplified procedures: Date 15 days before deadline for tenders>  <Negotiated procedures: Date X days before deadline for tenders[[1]](#footnote-2)> | < Time > |
| **Last date for the contracting authority to issue clarification** | < Date 8 days before deadline for tenders > | - |
| **Deadline for submitting tenders** | < Date > | < Time > |
| **Interviews (if any)** | [< Date >] [Not applicable] | - |
| **Completion date for evaluating technical offers** | < Date > | - |
| **Notification of award** | < Date at most 90 days after deadline for tenders > | - |
| **Contract signature** | < Date at most 150 days after deadline for tenders > | - |
| **Start date** | < Date > | - |

**Provisional date**

1. **Participation, experts and subcontracting**
2. Participation in this tender procedure is open only to the invited tenderers. For the eligibility, please see point 10 of the contract notice.
3. Natural or legal persons are not entitled to participate in this tender procedure or be awarded a contract if they are in any of the situations mentioned in Article 136 of the Financial Regulation. Should they do so, their tender will be considered unsuitable or irregular respectively.
4. In the cases listed in Article 136 of the Financial Regulation tenderers may be excluded from EU financed procedures and be subject to financial penalties up to 10 % of the total value of the contract in accordance with the Financial Regulation in force. This information may be published on the Commission website in accordance with the Financial Regulation in force.
5. The contract between the tenderer/contractor and its experts, or the third party making available the experts, shall contain a provision that experts are subject to the approval of the partner country. It is furthermore recommended that this contract contain a dispute resolution clause.
6. Subcontracting is allowed but the contractor will remain fully liable towards the contracting authority for performance of the contract as a whole. The tenderer and, where applicable, entities on whose capacities it relies with regard to criteria relating to the economic and financial capacity shall be jointly liable for the performance of the contract. If the tenderer intends to subcontract one or more parts of the contracted services, this must be clearly stated in the organisation and methodology and in the tender submission form.

To be inserted only in case the contracting authority identifies certain critical activities cannot be subcontracted [The contracting authority requires that the following critical tasks be performed directly by the tenderer itself or, where the tender is submitted by a group of economic operators, a participant in the group:

1 <Critical Task 1 (to be defined)>

2 <Critical task 2 (to be defined)>

1. …etc]
2. All subcontractors and capacity providing entities must be eligible for the contract. If the identity of the intended subcontractor is already known at the time of submitting the tender, the tenderer must furnish a statement guaranteeing the eligibility of the subcontractor. If any subcontractor/capacity-providing entity identified in this way does not meet the eligibility criteria, the tender shall be rejected. If the identity of the subcontractor is not known at the time of submitting the tender, any subcontract must be awarded according to Article 4 of the general conditions of the contract.
3. Subcontractors and capacity providing entities cannot be in any of the exclusion situations listed in Article 136 of the Financial Regulation.
4. For the avoidance of doubt, where the experts are not directly employed or contracted by the tenderer/contractor but through a third party, the latter is a sub-contractor.

Experts made available by any third party (sub-contractors) are considered for all purposes related to the present contract to be the personnel of the contractor.

1. **Content of tenders**

## Offers, all correspondence and documents related to the tender exchanged by the tenderer and the contracting authority must be written in [English][national language].

## Supporting documents and printed literature furnished by the tenderer may be in another language, provided they are accompanied by a translation into the language of the procedure. For the purposes of interpreting the tender, the language of the procedure has precedence.

The tender must include a technical offer and a financial offer.

The electronic version of the offer must be included with the printed version. If there are any discrepancies between the electronic version and the original, printed version, the latter has precedence.]

Failure to fulfil the requirements in clauses 4.1, 4.2 and 8 will constitute an irregularity and may result in rejection of the tender.

**4.1. Technical offer**

The technical offer must include the following documents:

1. **Tender submission form** (see Part D of this tender dossier) including:
2. [Optional for global-price contracts Signed statements of exclusivity and availability (using the template included with the tender submission form), one for each key expert, the purpose of which are as follows:

* The key experts proposed in this tender must not be part of any other tender submitted for this tender procedure. They must therefore commit themselves exclusively to the tenderer.
* Each key expert must also undertake to be available, able and willing to work for the whole period scheduled for his/her input to implement the tasks set out in the terms of reference and/or in the organisation and methodology.

Note that non-key experts must not be asked to sign statements of exclusivity and availability.The expert may participate in parallel tender procedures but must inform the contracting authority of these in the statement of exclusivity and availability. Furthermore, the expert is expected to notify the tenderer immediately if he/she is successful in another tender procedure and he/she is expected to accept the first engagement offered to him/her chronologically.

If a key expert is proposed as a key expert by more than one tenderer with the agreement of the key expert, the corresponding tenders may be rejected. The same applies if the key expert proposed has been involved in the preparation of the project. The expert concerned will be excluded from this tender procedure.

Having selected a firm partly on the basis of an evaluation of the key experts presented in the tender, the contracting authority expects the contract to be executed by these specific experts. However, after the award letter, the selected tenderer may propose replacements for the key experts under certain conditions (for further information see point 14).]

1. A signed **declaration** using the format attached to the tender submission form together with a signed "Declaration on honour on exclusion criteria and selection criteria"[[2]](#footnote-3) from each legal entity identified in the tender submission form and from each sub-contractor and/or capacity providing entity, using the format attached to the tender submission form.
2. A completed **financial identification form** (see Annex VI to the draft contract) to indicate the bank account into which payments should be made if the tender is successful.
3. The **legal entity file** and supporting documents.
4. Duly authorised signature: an official document (statutes, power of attorney, notary statement, etc.) proving that the person who signs on behalf of the company/joint venture/consortium is duly authorised to do so.
5. **Organisation and methodology** (will become Annex III to the contract), to be drawn up by the tenderer using the format in Annex III to the draft contract.

[For fee-based contracts:The ‘Estimated number of working days’ worksheet (in the budget breakdown spread sheet for Annex V) must be included in the organisation and methodology.]

1. [Optional for global-price contracts **Key experts** (to become Annex IV to the contract). The key experts are those whose involvement is considered to be instrumental to achieve the contract objectives.] [For fee-based contracts only: Their positions and responsibilities are defined in Section 6.1.1 of the terms of reference in Annex II to the draft contract and they are subject to evaluation according to the evaluation grid in Part C of this tender dossier.] [The evaluation committee may also call them for interview.]

[Optional for global-price contracts Annex IV to the draft contract contains the templates that tenderers must use, including:

1. a list of the names of the key experts;
2. the CVs of each of the key experts.Each CV should be no longer than 3 pages and only one CV must be provided for each position identified in the terms of reference. Only the work experience mentioned in the CV will be considered by the evaluation committee. Note that the CVs of non-key experts must not be submitted.

The qualifications and experience of each key expert must clearly match the profiles indicated in the terms of reference. If an expert does not meet the minimum requirements for each evaluation criterion (i.e. qualification and skills, general professional experience and specific professional experience), he/she must be rejected. In such case the entire tender shall be rejected.

Tenderers must provide the following documents for any key experts proposed:

- a copy of the diplomas mentioned in their CVs,

- a copy of employer certificates or references or signed copies of consultancy or labour contracts proving the professional experience indicated in their CVs. The admissibility of any other supporting documents to prove the work experience indicated in the CV will be subject to the discretion of the contracting authority.

Only diplomas and documented experience will be taken into account. Previous experience which would have led to breach of contract and termination shall not be used as reference.]

(4) Non key experts may also be instrumental to achieve the contract objectives. However, they are not subject to evaluation by the evaluation committee. Their positions and responsibilities may be defined in Section 6.1.2 of the terms of reference in Annex II to the draft contract.

(5) Documentary proof or statements required under the law of the country in which the company (or each of the companies for consortia), the sub-contractors and the capacity providing entities are effectively established, to show that they are not in any of the exclusion situations listed in Article 136 of the Financial Regulation. This evidence, documents or statements must be dated, no more than one year before the date of submission of the tender. In addition, a statement must be furnished stating that the situations described in these documents have not changed since then.

If the nature of your entity is such that it cannot fall into the exclusion situations and/or cannot provide the documents indicated above (for instance, national public administrations and international organisations), please provide a declaration explaining this situation.

The contracting authority may waive the obligation of any tenderer to submit the documentary evidence referred to above based on a risk assessment, or if such evidence has already been submitted for the purposes of another procurement procedure, provided that the issue date of the documents does not exceed one year and that they are still valid. In this case, the tenderer must declare on his/her honour that the documentary evidence has already been provided in a previous procurement procedure and confirm that his/her situation has not changed.

(6) Documentary evidence of the financial and economic capacity and/or of the technical and professional capacity according to the selection criteria specified in point 16 of the contract notice. The documentary evidence of the financial and economic capacity and the technical and professional capacity according to the selection criteria specified in the additional information about the contract notice (annex A5f) has to be provided at evaluation stage, upon request of the contracting authority.]

Tenderers are reminded that the provision of false information in this tender procedure may lead to the rejection of their tender and to their exclusion from EU-funded procedures and contracts.

**4.2. Financial offer**

[For global price contracts*:*

The financial offer must be presented as an amount in [Euro] [<ISO code of national currency> only in the following cases: (i) when legal or local constraints exceptionally impose using the national currency; (ii) when needed, for contracts within the imprest component of a programme estimate][[3]](#footnote-4) and must be submitted using the template for the global-price version of Annex V to part B of this tender dossier. The electronic version of this document ‘B8 — Budget for a global-price contract’ can be provided to the tenderers upon request.

The global price must be broken down by outputs.]

[For fee-based contracts*:*

The financial offer must be presented in Euro and must include the following documents (using the templates included in the fee-based version of Annex V to part B of this tender dossier. The electronic version of this document ‘[Budget breakdown for a fee-based contract](http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/work/procedures/documents/execution/services/b8annexvbudgetfee_en.xls)’ can be provided to the tenderers upon request):

* Budget breakdown
* Working days

**To complete the spreadsheet:**

1. Enter the fee rates for each category of expert in the first worksheet (‘Budget breakdown’)
2. Enter the estimated numbers of working days for each category of expert during the period of implementation of the tasks in the second worksheet (‘Working days’)
3. Enter the lump sums proposed for items required in Section 6.6 of the terms of reference in the first worksheet (‘Budget breakdown’), if any
4. Enter the provision for incidental expenditure given in Section 6.5 of the terms of reference in the first worksheet (‘Budget breakdown’)
5. Enter the provision for expenditure verification given in Section 6.7 of the terms of reference in the first worksheet (‘Budget breakdown’).

The estimated budget for incidental expenditure and expenditure verification are to be pre-filled in the template budget breakdown in the tender dossier.

Note that a schedule based on the ‘Estimated number of working days’ worksheet within this spreadsheet must be included as part of the organisation and methodology in the technical offer.]

Tenderers are reminded that the maximum budget available for this contract, as stated in the contract notice, is EUR <amount>. Payments under this contract will be made in the currency of the tender.

The applicable tax and customs arrangements are as follows:

[For fee-based contracts:

Incidental expenditure

Incidental expenditure incurred by the contractor and, if applicable, approved by the contracting authority shall be reimbursed in full.]

1. **Variant solutions**

Tenderers are not authorised to tender for a variant in addition to this tender.

1. **Period during which tenders are binding**

Tenderers are bound by their tenders for 90 days after the deadline for submitting tenders or until they have been notified of non-award. In exceptional cases, before the period of validity expires, the contracting authority may ask tenderers to extend the period for a specific number of days, which may not exceed 40.

The selected tenderer must maintain its tender for a further 60 days. A further period of 60 days is added to the validity period irrespective of the date of notification. This period can be further extended when the contracting authority is required to obtain the recommendation of the panel referred to in Section 2.6.10.1.1 of the practical guide, up to the adoption of that recommendation.

1. **Additional information before the deadline for submitting tenders**

Tenderers may submit questions in writing to the following address up to 15 days before the deadline for submission of tenders, specifying the publication reference and the contract title:

<Contact name  
Address  
Fax No  
[E-mail:……>]

The contracting authority has no obligation to provide clarification after this date. Any clarification of the tender dossier will be communicated simultaneously to all tenderers at the latest 8 calendar days before the deadline for submitting tenders.

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 tender period may be excluded from the tender procedure.

No information meeting or site visit is foreseen.

1. **Submission of tenders**

Tenders must be sent to the contracting authority before < date & time of deadline, at least 30 days after the date of the invitation letter and at the close of business of a working day >.

They must include the requested documents in clause 4 above and be sent:

**EITHER** by post or by courier service, in which case the evidence shall be constituted by the postmark or the date of the deposit slip[[4]](#footnote-5), to:

[<Address of contracting authority>]

**OR** **hand delivered** by the participant in person or by an agent **directly** to the premises of the contracting authority in return for a **signed and dated receipt**, in which case the evidence shall be constituted by this acknowledgement of receipt, to:

[<Address of contracting authority including opening hours >]

**OR** **by to the following e-platform: <web address of the e-platform> or Email**, to:

[<Email address of contracting authority>]

The contracting authority may, for reasons of administrative efficiency, reject any tender submitted on time to the postal service but received, for any reason beyond the contracting authority's control, after the effective date of approval of the evaluation report, if accepting tenders that were submitted on time but arrived late would considerably delay the evaluation procedure or jeopardise decisions already taken and notified.

[Email submission:

Tenders must be submitted in one Email, containing all the parts of the tender as it should in the case of paper submission. If the submitted tender is composed of several files, a clear table of contents have to be submitted which clearly identifies the various parts of the submitted tender. Instructions concerning the paper submission is to be followed as far as it is relevant to the Email submission. The files must be compressed and encrypted with a password. The password will be requested after the deadline and before opening the bids.

[Paper submission:

Tenders must be submitted in a parcel or envelope providing the following information:

1. the address for submitting tenders indicated above;

b) the reference code of the tender procedure (i.e. <publication reference>);

c) the words ‘Not to be opened before the tender-opening session’ and <equivalent phrase in local language>;

d) the name of the tenderer.

The pages of the technical and financial offers must be numbered.]

1. **Amending or withdrawing tenders**

Tenderers may amend or withdraw their tenders by written notification prior to the deadline for submitting tenders. Tenders may not be amended after this deadline.

Any such notification of amendment or withdrawal must be prepared and submitted in accordance with clause 8. The outer envelope (and the relevant inner envelope) must be marked ‘Amendment’ or ‘Withdrawal’ as appropriate.]

1. **Costs for preparing tenders**

No costs incurred by the tenderer in preparing and submitting the tender are reimbursable. All such costs must be borne by the tenderer, including the cost of interviewing proposed experts.

1. **Ownership of tenders**

The contracting authority retains ownership of all tenders received under this tendering procedure. Consequently, tenderers do not have the right to have their tenders returned to them.

1. **Evaluation of tenders**

**12.1. Evaluation of technical offers**

The quality of each technical offer will be evaluated in accordance with the award criteria and the weighting detailed in the evaluation grid in Part C of this tender dossier. No other award criteria will be used. The award criteria will be examined in accordance with the requirements indicated in the terms of reference.

**12.2. Evaluation of financial offers**

Upon completion of the technical evaluation, the envelopes containing the financial offers for tenders that were not eliminated during the technical evaluation will be opened (i.e. those with an average score of 75 points or more). Tenders exceeding the maximum budget available for the contract will not be accepted and will therefore not be further evaluated.]

[For fee-based contracts*:*

The provision for incidental expenditure and the provision for expenditure verification stated in the terms of reference and to be included in the budget breakdown will not be taken into account in the comparison of the financial offers.

Any arithmetical errors are corrected without penalty to the tenderer such that, if there is a discrepancy between a fee rate and the total amount derived from multiplying the fee rate by the corresponding number of working days, the fee rate as quoted must prevail, unless the opinion of the evaluation committee contains an obvious error in the fee rate, in which event the total amount as quoted must prevail and the fee rate must be corrected.]

**12.3. Choice of selected tenderer**

The best price-quality ratio is established by weighing technical quality against price on an 80/20 basis.

**12.4. Confidentiality**

The entire evaluation procedure is confidential, subject to the contracting authority’s legislation on access to documents. The evaluation committee’s decisions are collective and its deliberations are held in closed session. The members of the evaluation committee are bound to secrecy. The evaluation reports and written records are for official use only and may be communicated neither to the tenderers nor to any party other than the contracting authority, the European Commission, the European Anti-Fraud Office and the European Court of Auditors.

1. **Ethics clauses / Corruptive practices**

a) Absence of conflict of interest

The tenderer must not be affected by any conflict of interest and must have no equivalent relation in that respect with other tenderers or parties involved in the project. Any attempt by a tenderer to obtain confidential information, enter into unlawful agreements with competitors or influence the evaluation committee or the contracting authority during the process of examining, clarifying, evaluating and comparing tenders will lead to the rejection of its tender and may result in administrative penalties according to the Financial Regulation in force.

b) Respect for human rights as well as environmental legislation and core labour standards

The tenderer and its personnel must comply with human rights and applicable data protection rules. In particular and in accordance with the applicable basic act, tenderers and applicants who have been awarded contracts must comply with the environmental legislation including multilateral environmental agreements, and with the core labour standards as applicable and as defined in the relevant International Labour Organisation conventions (such as the conventions on freedom of association and collective bargaining; elimination of forced and compulsory labour; abolition of child labour).

**Zero tolerance for sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment:**

The contracting authority applies a policy of 'zero tolerance' in relation to all wrongful conduct which has an impact on the professional credibility of the tenderer.

Physical abuse or punishment, or threats of physical abuse, sexual abuse or exploitation, harassment and verbal abuse, as well as other forms of intimidation shall be prohibited.

c) Anti-corruption and anti-bribery

The tenderer shall comply with all applicable laws and regulations and codes relating to anti-bribery and anti-corruption. The Managing Authority reserves the right to suspend or cancel project financing if corrupt practices of any kind are discovered at any stage of the award process or during the execution of a contract and if the contracting authority fails to take all appropriate measures to remedy the situation. For the purposes of this provision, ‘corrupt practices’ are the offer of a bribe, gift, gratuity or commission to any person as an inducement or reward for performing or refraining from any act relating to the award of a contract or execution of a contract already concluded with the contracting authority.

d) Unusual commercial expenses

Tenders will be rejected or contracts terminated if it emerges that the award or execution of a contract has given rise to unusual commercial expenses. Such unusual commercial expenses are commissions not mentioned in the main contract or not stemming from a properly concluded contract referring to the main contract, commissions not paid in return for any actual and legitimate service, commissions remitted to a tax haven, commissions paid to a payee who is not clearly identified or commissions paid to a company which has every appearance of being a front company.

Contractors found to have paid unusual commercial expenses on projects funded by the European Union are liable, depending on the seriousness of the facts observed, to have their contracts terminated or to be permanently excluded from receiving EU funds.

e) Breach of obligations, irregularities or fraud

The contracting authority reserves the right to suspend or cancel the procedure, where the award procedure proves to have been subject to breach of obligations, irregularities or fraud. If breach of obligations, irregularities or fraud are discovered after the award of the contract, the contracting authority may refrain from concluding the contract.

1. **Signature of contract(s)**

**14.1. Notification of award**

Tenderers will be notified of the outcome of this procurement procedure in writing.

[For fee-based contract and for global price with key experts:

The successful tenderer shall then confirm availability or unavailability of their key-experts within 5 days from the date of the notification of award.

In case of unavailability the tenderer will be allowed to propose replacement key-expert(s). The successful tenderer shall give due justification for the exchange of key-expert but the acceptance will not be limited to specific cases. Several replacement key-experts may be proposed but only one time-period of 15 days from the date of the notification of award will be offered. The replacement key-expert(s) cannot be an expert proposed by another tenderer in the same call for tender.

The replacement key-expert's total score must be at least as high as the scores of the key-expert proposed in the tender. It must be emphasised that the minimum requirements for each evaluation criteria must be met by the replacement expert.

If replacement key-experts are not proposed within the 15 days delay or if the replacement experts are not sufficiently qualified, or that the proposal of the replacement key-expert amends the award conditions which took place, the contracting authority may decide to award the contract to the second best technically compliant tenderer (also giving them a chance to replace a key-expert should he/she not be available).

Should the contracting authority learn that a tenderer has confirmed the availability of a key expert and signed the contract although the tenderer has deliberately concealed the fact that the key-expert is unavailable from the date specified in the tender dossier for the start of the assignment, the contracting authority may decide to terminate the contract on the basis of article 34.2 (m) of the general conditions.

It is reminded that the tenderer/contractor may also be subject to administrative and financial penalties foreseen in article 10.2 of the general conditions for service contracts. Furthermore it may lead to a tenderer's /contractor's exclusion from other contracts funded by the European Union.

**]**

**14.2. Signature of the contract(s)**

Within 30 days of receipt of the contract already signed by the contracting authority, the selected tenderer shall sign and date the contract and return it to the contracting authority.

Failure of the selected tenderer to comply with this requirement may constitute grounds for annulling the decision to award the contract. In this event, the contracting authority may award the tender to another tenderer or cancel the tender procedure.

The other tenderers will, at the same time as the notification of award is submitted, be informed that their tenders were not retained, by electronic means or standard letter, including an indication of the relative weaknesses of their tender by way of a comparative table of the scores for the winning tender and the unsuccessful tender. The second best tenderer is informed of the notification of award to the successful tenderer with the reservation of the possibility to receive a notification of award in case of inability to sign the contract with the first ranked tenderer. The second tenderer may refuse the award of the contract if, when receiving a notification of award, the 90 days of validity of their tender has expired.

The contracting authority will furthermore, at the same time, also inform the remaining unsuccessful tenderers and the consequence of these letters will be that the validity of their offers must not be retained.

1. **Cancellation of the tender procedure**

In the event of cancellation of the tender procedure, the contracting authority will notify tenderers of the cancellation.

If the tender procedure is cancelled before the outer envelope of any tender has been opened, the unopened and sealed envelopes will be returned to the tenderers.

Cancellation may occur, for example, where:

* the tender procedure has been unsuccessful, i.e. no suitable, qualitatively or financially acceptable tender has been received or there is no valid response at all;
* there are fundamental changes to the economic or technical data of the project;
* exceptional circumstances or force majeure render normal performance of the contract impossible;
* all technically acceptable tenders exceed the financial resources available;
* there have been breach of obligations, irregularities or frauds in the procedure, in particular if they have prevented fair competition;
* the award is not in compliance with sound financial management, i.e. does not respect the principles of economy, efficiency and effectiveness (e.g. the price proposed by the tenderer to whom the contract is to be awarded is objectively disproportionate with regard to the price of the market).

In no event shall the contracting authority be liable for any damages whatsoever including, without limitation, damages for loss of profits, in any way connected with the cancellation of a tender procedure, even if the contracting authority has been advised of the possibility of damages. The publication of a contract notice does not commit the contracting authority to implement the programme or project announced.

1. **Appeals**

Tenderers believing that they have been harmed by an error or irregularity during the award process may file a complaint.

**17. Data Protection**

Processing of personal data related to this tender procedure by the contracting authority takes place in accordance with the national legislation of the state of the contracting authority and with the provisions of the respective financing agreement.

1. Define a reasonable deadline [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
2. See point 4 above and point 8 below: in case of electronic submission, tenderers must keep the originals of the Declaration on Honour for control purposes and must provide them to the contracting authority upon request. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
3. The currency of the tender is the currency of the contract and the currency of payment. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
4. It is recommended to use registered mail in case the postmark would not be readable. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)