



Questions relating to the open tender procedure concerning

Study on "Indicators for media pluralism in the Member States — towards a risk-based approach" — SMART 007A 2007-0002

Deadline to submit the offers: 31.05.2007

(Questions and answers are presented in original linguistic version)

Questions

1. Are Non-European researchers able to participate in the study?

European Commission's answer:

Yes. With regard to the participation in the tendering procedure, the following applies:

Participation in tendering procedures is open on equal terms to all natural and legal persons coming within the scope of the Treaties **and to all natural and legal persons in a third country** which have a special agreement with the Communities in the field of public procurement on the conditions laid down in that agreement.

Operators in third countries which have signed a bilateral or multilateral agreement with the Communities in the field of public procurement are allowed to take part in the tendering procedure on the conditions laid down in this agreement. It is possible to accept tenders submitted by operators in third countries which have not signed such agreements, but they may also be refused.

2. Is there any specific form to insert the items regarding the administrative and financial parts?

European Commission's answer:

There is no specific form to be used for the offer itself.

However, to identify yourself following standard forms are to be used:

- Administrative identification form (Annex I of Tender Specifications) and
- Financial Identification form/Bank Identification form (Specimen for the tenderer available in Annex II of Tender Specifications)
- Exclusion criteria and non conflict of interest form (Annex III of Tender Specifications)

3. The study must cover all the countries (27), but can we make a deeper study about the promoter country?

European Commission's answer:

The General and Specific objectives (pages 2-5 of Tender Specifications) refer to Member States. Specific Objective (2) reads “Indicators to /.../ include: different situations found across the 27 EU Member States /.../” and also “The indicators should be conceived so that a complete series of Member State analyses could be commissioned *at some point in future*” i.e. this is not the objective of this study.

The indicators, objective of this study, could allow more in depth Member States analyses at a later stage not foreseen within the scope of this study to make.

4. Could the project have a co-leadership?

European Commission's answer:

The tender can be proposed by a consortium (Item 2.4, Part 2 (Administrative details) of the Tender Specifications) or group of tenderers, also regarded as partners. Tenderers of the group, if awarded the contract, will have an equal standing towards the contracting authority in executing the contract. A lead contractor is to be designated and will sign the contract with the European Commission.

5. The bank guarantee is required for which amount?

European Commission's answer:

According to item 6, part 2 (Administrative details) of the Tender Specifications:

- depending on the financial solidity of the tenderer, payment of the pre-financing **may** be made conditional upon furnishing by the Contractor of a financial guarantee.
- For a pre-financing exceeding EUR 150 000 a financial guarantee will be required in any case. When applicable in accordance with the instructions above, the financial guarantee in respect to the pre-financing shall be equal to at least the amount of any pre-financing request (Art.I.4.1 of the Draft Contract)
- in addition, a performance guarantee shall be constituted by deduction of 10% from the interim payment.

6. Is it possible to contract an external company to make, by chance, an inquiry to several European citizens?

European Commission's answer:

Subcontracting is allowed subject to General conditions (Art II.2.2 and Art II.13 of Draft Contract). The tenderer submitting the offer, if awarded the contract, shall become the sole contractor and shall assume full liability towards the European Commission for the performance of the contract as a whole.

7. Can other categories/items be created for administrative and financial support, for example?

European Commission's answer:

According to Item 4.2 Price of Part 2 (Administrative details) of the Tender Specifications, the price must be broken down in following categories:

- a) Professional fees
- b) Travel and Subsistence Costs
- c) Other costs (e.g. Workshop)

The type of costs included in the price offer must fall within the scope of the Tender Specifications.

8. Is there any limit for Personnel Expenditure, as for the number of collaborators, namely researchers?

European Commission's answer:

No. The limit is established by the estimated value of the study (see II.2.1 of Contract Notice)

9. Is there a descriptive document of this study?

European Commission's answer:

The description of the study in terms of its objectives, duration and the deliverables required are set out in part 1 of the Tender Specifications.

10. Is a Letter of intent required by the Consortium partners?

European Commission's answer:

No. The letter of intent is meant for subcontractors.

11. Do the forms in Annex I - III of the Tender specifications have to be filled by all consortium members or just by us as Lead Partner?

European Commission's answer:

- Annex I - Administrative Identification form. It has to be filled in by all tenderers (Part 2, point 1.3, of Tender Specifications). "If two or more applicants submit a joint bid, one must be designated as the Lead Contractor and agent responsible."
- Annex II - Financial Identification form. Only to be filled in by Lead Contractor.

- Annex III - according to Part 2, point 2.3, of Tender Specifications, "Tenderers - including subcontractors if any- shall provide a declaration on their honour (see Annex III)". Therefore, all consortium members have to fill in Annex III.

12. Regarding CVs: are full CVs of all involved personnel (e.g. in the Europass format) attached to the offer recommended or does it suffice to have written biographical information on the team members within the text of the offer?

European Commission's answer:

According to Part 2, point 3.3, of Tender Specifications, "the team proposed by the tenderer should have all the skills and experience described". A full CV seems to be the most appropriate instrument to provide this information although, if exhaustive, it could also be provided with a biography.

13. On clause 4.2 of the Tender Specifications, you refer to professional fees of each category of staff engaged in the project. Is there a limit for consultant daily fees used by the European Commission that we can use as guidance?

European Commission's answer:

No, the European Commission has no fixed limits of consultancy fees.

14. We understand that the main study will cover 27 EU countries. Notwithstanding that, can we present additional analysis based on some of the members of the EU?

European Commission's answer:

Please see clarification no. 3 on this document

15. Is it possible to consider costs with logistic support of the project in places considered fundamental, namely Brussels?

European Commission's answer:

According to Part 2, point 4.2, of Tender Specifications, "Professional fees: must cover all expenditure incurred in the performance of the contract with the exception of those under (b) /.../ Travel and subsistence".

16. Do you foresee any incompatibility issues if some of the team research members have relevant political activities, e.g., national parliament members?

European Commission's answer:

According to Part 2, point 3.3, of Tender Specifications, "the team proposed by the tenderer should have all the skills and experience described". Experts involved in the project must have appropriate Technical Background (see Technical specifications - Part 2, Point 3.3). Moreover, according to Part 2, point 2.3, of Tender

Specifications, "Tenderers - including subcontractors if any- shall provide a declaration on their honour (see Annex III)".

17. Do you foresee the possibility of choosing more than one proposal or will the study be rendered to only one Tender?

European Commission's answer:

If several suitable bids are selected, "the contract will be awarded to **the** tender offering the best value for money, which will be **the one** with the best quality-price ratio /.../"(Part 2 of Tender Specifications, point 5).

18. Would you be willing to consider in "Other Costs" the costs for services in specific activities as the gathering of market data?

European Commission's answer:

Gathering of data is probably an expenditure incurred in the performance of the contract of the kind "Professional fees" - please see clarification no.15 on this document.

19. Regarding risk assessment research is it necessary to already include in the proposal the matrix of the research model and risk variables or is it enough to address the main topics regarding risks associated with media regulation?

European Commission's answer:

The offer should be detailed enough to convince the evaluators of its potential, but the project should not be undertaken in the offer. More details about the Award Criteria are available in Part 2, point 4.1 of the Technical Specifications.

20. During the project, will it be possible to have some assistance from the European Commission departments to obtain certain data base to support research activities (e.g. Euro Barometer)?

European Commission's answer:

Yes, for data that is easily available and accessible inside the house unless data is confidential. Eurobarometer full reports are available on Europa at http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/index_en.htm

21. We would appreciate if you could inform if it is feasible to present a proposal with 2 alternative options for the scope of work, namely one option which would include a European poll related with the purpose of the project but which could be seen as a complementary and independent product. This option, made at a cross European level would represent an increased budget.

European Commission's answer:

No, the Tendering Specifications do not include an option regarding a European poll being made at a cross-European level. Moreover, no increase in the budget is possible: "Offers prices must not exceed 500 000€in total" (Tendering Specifications, Part 2, item 1.6). Moreover, in point II.2.2 of the contract notice of this call for tender, published in Official Journal 2007/S 44-053243 of 03/03/2007, it is clearly indicated that options are not authorised.

22. Is it feasible to present a proposal with 2 alternative options for the scope of work, namely one option which would include a European poll related with the purpose of the project but which could be seen as a complementary and independent product. This poll will not be the main instrument, it will be only another method to collect information and improve the study. This option, made at a cross European level would not represent an increased budget.

European Commission's answer:

The answer to your question is available in the query number 21 of the Clarifications documents available in our Web Site at http://ec.europa.eu/avpolicy/info_centre/tenders/index_en.htm.

Your offer must comprise a single project with a single price and without options.