

**CALL FOR TENDERS No PO/SG/C4-01/2017**

**Support for the development and operation of a collaborative platform for the European Citizens' Initiative – Pilot project**

**QUESTIONS & ANSWERS**

No	QUESTIONS	ANSWERS
01	<p>In the tender specifications, in the description of Task 1, you refer to “other communication activities carried out by the Commission on the ECI.” Can you please specify these activities?</p>	<p>The Technical Specifications refer to the design and implementation by the contractor of a communication and engagement strategy for the Platform, for which complementarity with other communication activities related to the European Citizens' Initiative (ECI) will need to be ensured.</p> <p>Over the past years, promotion of the ECI has taken different forms such as: organisation of, or participation in conferences and study visits; references to the ECI were included in Commission-wide communication campaigns and materials; brochures, posters and other similar outputs were produced and disseminated; an ECI website was set up and is still ongoing; and more recently a social media campaign to promote the public consultation linked to the revision of the ECI.</p> <p>The Commission will intensify communication on the ECI in the coming months. The preparation of a comprehensive strategy is underway which will include a wide range of online and physical initiatives covering fairly all Member States. The objective is to increase awareness of the ECI and its utility as an instrument for citizens’ participation at EU level, as well as to empower multipliers in the Member States to autonomously promote the ECI. In addition to the types of activities mentioned above (i.e. events, promotion materials, etc.), a strong social media dimension is expected, accompanied by the development of the punctual communication products needed, including the necessary content and audio-visual materials. Details of this communication strategy will be shared with the contractor.</p>
02	<p>In the description of Task 1, in section 1.1., you describe the task of the contractor “to contribute to the final design of the IT tool.” To what degree and in how many iterations do you expect the contractor to be involved in the final design?</p>	<p>As specified in the Technical Specifications, the Commission will make available the IT infrastructure for the Platform the main features of which will be ready by the time the contract starts. A detailed presentation (including customised training) of the tool will be organised for the contractor during the first month of the preparation phase in order to allow the contractor to provide suggestions on the final design and content. A close collaboration between the contractor and the Commission is expected so that the Platform can be finalised and ready to go live within 12 weeks of the contract start date. The tenderers are invited to outline how they perceive the scope and the intensity of the collaboration with the Commission.</p>
03	<p>In the description of Task 1, in section 1.2., you describe the role of the contractor “to control, as appropriate, inputs from third parties in the interactive sections of the Platform.” Can you please clarify what you here mean by “control”?</p>	<p>'Control' refers to ensuring quality assurance of contributions described under Task 2 more specifically (discussion forum; blog articles and related comments; etc.), but also to some extent Task 4; e.g. contributions should not go against EU values, and should not be abusive, frivolous, non related to the Platform scope of activity; etc.</p>
04	<p>In the description of Task 1, in section 1.4., you refer to “participatory activities (possibly in the context of ECI-related events organised by the Commission or other stakeholders) …” Could you please clarify what you mean by “participatory activities” and the nature of the “ECI-related events”?</p>	<p>ECI events will be organised by the Commission (see answer to Question No1) or by other EU institutions and bodies or other stakeholders. These can take the form of conferences, workshops, training sessions, etc.</p> <p>An activity can be defined as 'participatory' when inputs on a particular issue, system or tool, etc. are collected in an inclusive manner; i.e. involving those directly affected by the issue or using the system or tool referred to above (i.e. in the context of this call for tender, by the ECI (potential) practitioners using the</p>

		Platform).
05	In the description of Task 2, you write that the “contractor will be responsible for running all the interactive components of the Platform ...” Can you please confirm what will be the “interactive components” of the Platform?	The interactive components are those elements of the Platform where the users of the Platform can provide contributions; e.g. discussion forum; blog articles and related comments. These components will involve a necessary moderation by the contractor.
06	In the description of Task 3, in section 3.1., you describe guidance material to be developed “based on the experience of the organisers of European citizens' initiatives or other similar tools at national or international levels.” Is our understanding correct that the European Commission will collect and provide the information related to the experience of organisers and tools are national and international level?	It will be the role of the contractor to gather and process the information related to the experience of ECI organisers (or organisers of similar initiatives), based on the existing literature (e.g. reports, articles related to the ECI) or by establishing direct contact with a selected number of organisers.  It will also be the role of the contractor to carry out research on other similar tools at national or international levels, to be used for inspiration for the preparation of guidance materials.  The tenderers are invited to outline whether and how they intend to include these sources in their guidance materials.
07	In the description of Task 4, you describe the contractor will “handle citizens' enquiries by responding to them” and to translate enquiries made in a different EU official language into English. In order to estimate and budget the volume of work, do you have any estimates as to the number of enquiries you expect to be made and the percentage share of enquiries made in other EU official languages?	For the reasons outlined in the answer to Question No 8, no such estimates are available. However the tenderer may set out the maximum number of enquiries it is willing to reply per month.  (* )
08	Is our understanding correct that the financial offer is a fixed price offer, covers all activities implemented over the course of the contract and cannot be altered after the start of the contract? And if yes, how do you expect tenderers to account for budget items where the volume of work cannot be known? We are referring in particular to budget items 2.1., 2.2. and 4., where the work effort is directly related to the number of discussions, comments and enquiries received and can be expected to grow in relation to the project's success.	This contract for services will be carried out in the context of a pilot project; i.e. the objective is to test the relevance and usability of such a tool. The short duration of the operational phase should also be taken into account; i.e. 9 months. The activities referred to (in particular those under Tasks 2.1 and 4) will therefore be limited in time. The intensity of these activities will also depend on the quality and efficiency of the communication and engagement strategy described under Task 1.3, which the contractor will be fully in charge to design and implement.  For the budget items referred to, a monthly price is required – with a total amount corresponding to a monthly price multiplied by 9.
09	In connection with the above-mentioned call for tenders, could you please clarify the following: sub-criterion 2.2 of award criterion 2 refers to the “coherence of proposed internal rules, including engagement and payment of experts for their contributions”. Can you please explain what you here mean by “internal rules”? And why is reference made to the “engagement and payment of experts”, when it is our understanding that experts are	The "experts" referred to under this award criterion are those also referred to under Section 2.6. of the Tender Specifications (also referred to as "team of experts" or "extended team").  The following reference "proposed internal rules, including engagement and payment of experts for their contributions" should be understood as the rules defining the allocation of tasks within the project team (who does what and what interactions are to take place between the members). This covers in particular a clear definition of those cases where experts needs to be involved, including:  - Proposed arrangements for treating enquiries as referred to under Task 4; i.e. who should be in charge

	required members of the project team (as described in section 2.6 of the tender specifications) and need to be provided by the contractor?	<p>of dealing with the replies depending on the topics involved (either Core Team, team of Experts and legal Expert more specifically), including eligibility criteria, quality assurance measures; maximum number (if any) of enquiries which can be referred to experts, and target time-limits for replying to different types of enquiries;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The roles of different project team members as regards the design and delivery of all guidance outputs as referred to under Task 3, including how experts on different topics will be involved;</li> <li>- The roles of different project team members as regards regular moderation of the online discussion and preparation/publication of the blog entries under Task 2, including how experts on different topics will be involved.</li> </ul> <p>The payment of experts is to be understood as included in the global price.</p>
10	To our understanding no electronic copy is required. Please confirm	No electronic copy of the tender is required.
11	To our understanding, the inner envelope should be marked with the details mentioned in the first page of the Invitation to Tender. Will the outer envelope be marked only with the address for delivery? Please confirm.	In addition to the address for delivery, the outer envelope may also indicate the reference to the call for tenders.
12	In criterion 2, it is required from the tenderers to provide a detailed description including CVs. Is this an additional document? If yes, what would you like to be included?	The tenderer should provide details of the resources to be involved in the management of the contract and running of the related activities, in particular a description of the competences and experiences of each of the team members in line with the requirements of the call for tender. CVs should be annexed.
13	For the usability testing under task 1.1, are we correct in assuming that the European Commission will provide contact details for users with prior knowledge?	For the usability testing under task 1.1., the contractor is expected to come up with a list of suggested users with prior knowledge of the ECI. Support from the European Commission in identifying users will be discussed and agreed during the preparation phase.
14	For the online course under tasks 3.2., the tender specifications indicate that for option (b) the "frequency will need to be defined by the tenderer". Yet, the financial offer template requires tenderers to include for option (b) a monthly price applied to a total of 9 units, i.e. the template suggests a monthly frequency. Can you please clarify?	In the case where the tenderer chooses option b) under task 3.2 (i.e. organisation of webinars), the total cost of running this activity will need to be broken down per month over a period of 9 months, irrespective of the frequency of the activity.
15	For citizens' enquiries under task 4, can you provide tenderers with a percentage distribution of enquiries by type of enquiry (i.e. relating to the organisation of campaigns, networking, legal advice, registration procedure, etc.), based on current experience?	The Commission does not avail of recent statistics on this matter. However, the <a href="#">2015 report of the Commission on the ECI</a> includes relevant information on the types of questions channelled through the point of contact (see p. 13). (* )
16	Re. "Confluence": Will we be able to use the license of the Commission? Does your license for CONFLUENCE have a limited amount of user licenses?	The Commission's Directorate-General for Informatics (DIGIT) will install, configure and host Confluence. DIGIT will handle the license purchase for the production environment that is suitable for the amount of users.  An additional environment (other than the live/production one) will be available for testing and acceptance

		purpose. The contractor will be provided with the needed accounts and permissions to access for both environments.
17	Page 24 of the Specifications, paragraph 4.2.4, Criterion 2, reads 'A statement of the average annual manpower and the number of staff in the last three years must be provided.' Could you please clarify the difference between 'average annual manpower' and 'number of staff'?	The tenderer is requested to join a statement confirming the average annual manpower (full time equivalents) and the annual number of staff (persons) it employed in the last three years.
18	On page 11 of the TOR it is stated that: The tenderer shall at least outline, the approach to be used to finalise the design and develop the basic content of the Platform, including any specific features deemed to be necessary. On page 25 sub-criterion 1.1 of the award criteria states Scope: Quality and creative of the proposed initial content. We assume that we are supposed to give an outline of the content of the site, but not write any text (given the strict page limit).	The tenderer is not expected to provide either an outline of the content or prepare any suggested text as part of the tender. Please refer to question 02 in this Q&A document for further clarifications.
19	On page 19 of the TOR there is a reference to an interactive map and calendar. These items are not mentioned on page 10 in the section about the basic content. Please could you provide further details on what you are expecting from the contractor concerning this point?	The interactive map and the calendar do not actually form part of the basic features referred to further up in the technical specifications, but are additional functionalities that are offered by the Confluence software. Inputs from the tenderers on these two functionalities (i.e. ways in which an interactive map and an interactive calendar could be used e.g. highlighting ECI-related events) are welcome in the offers but actually not essential.
20	In the financial offer form there appears to be an error in the description of point 1.2. We believe that this is intended to read: "1.2. Coordinate the community of users". ("Design and implement a communication and user engagement strategy" is covered by point 1.3.) Could you please confirm?	There is indeed a typo for sub-task 1.2 in the financial offer form, which should read "1.2. Coordinate the community of users". See corrigendum (2) and revised template for the financial offer form. (**)

15 November 2017

(\*) Please note that the technical specifications were very slightly updated as regards Task 4 and published again on 13 October 2017 – see also corrigendum in the folder "[tender specifications and annexes](#)".

(\*\*) Please note that the financial offer form included a typo and was updated on 15 November 2017 – see also corrigendum 2 and revised financial offer form in the folder "[tender specifications and annexes](#)".