



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR ENERGY

DIRECTORATE C - New and Renewable Sources of Energy, Energy Efficiency & Innovation
C.2 - Energy Technologies and Research Co-ordination

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

INVITATION TO TENDER NO. ENER C2/2011-462-1

"SMART CITIES STAKEHOLDER PLATFORM"

CONTRACT NOTICE: JO S 65-104643

Last update: 11/05/2011

Question 1: What is the estimated budget for this contract?

Answer: The estimated maximum budget for this tender is 1.500.000 € the (more important) criterion is the estimated work amount of 2.000 man days. The European Commission will – nevertheless – select the bid with the best value for money.

Question 2: Will an extension of the deadline for the submission of bids be possible?

Answer: There is no extension planned for the deadline for submission of bids to this tender.

Question 3: Tenderers from which countries are eligible to take part in this tender procedure?

Answer: All countries having agreed to the "WTO Agreement on Government Procurement ([GPA](#))" are eligible. Tenderers coming from non-GPA countries may also take part in this tender, but only as part of a consortium. The coordinator – however – must be coming from a GPA country.

Question 4: Where can general information on the tender procedures and guidelines of the European Commission be found?

Answer: You can find official information about the tender procedures and guidelines [here](#).

Question 5: Does the estimated maximum budget of 1.500.000 € include incidental expenses (e.g. travel cost) and/or expenditure on material (e.g. costs for printing of information leaflets)?

Answer: According to chapter III.2.3 of the [Tender Specifications](#) the price offered by potential tenderers shall be a fixed amount including all expenses. It shall thus also include travel costs and any other expenditure.

As regards the maximum budget it has been stressed in the answer to question 1 that the European Commission will select the bid with the best value for money.

Question 6: In paragraph IV.1.2 1c) of the [Tender Specifications](#) it is stated that the tenderer cannot make any offer whatsoever from which an advantage can be derived under the contract.

- 6a) Could you please clarify the purpose of this paragraph?
- 6b) Does it mean that – once being contracted – potential contractors can't make a reference, that they are doing this contract when proposing other contracts?
- 6c) Does it mean that – once being contracted – potential contractors can't use any of their (external) experts as part of their competitive expertise when performing the contract?

Answer: Ad 6a): Paragraph IV.1.2 1c) aims to preclude that any illegitimate advantage is derived from the contract.

Ad 6b) and 6c): The answer to both questions is therefore "no" in principle, subject to the statement above and to other conditions mentioned in the tender documents, such as absence of conflict of interest.

Question 7: Is it possible to receive the tender documentation as a paper copy?

Answer: The access to all tender documents has been provided on the website http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/energy/tenders/2011_en.htm as mentioned in the Contract Notice JO S65-104643.

In accordance with Article 141(1) and (4) of the Implementing rules to the Financial Regulation, the Commission shall not send the tender documents in paper form if *unrestricted and full direct access by electronic means to the entire call for tenders and any additional documents* has been provided. Having complied with this requirement, the Commission does not intend to distribute paper copies of the tender documents.

Question 8: Would there be a conflict of interest if the bidder, or a separate entity within the group of the bidder, was currently working with cities on smart city projects or in the future worked with cities on smart cities projects and/or to develop proposals for projects to be funded under the Smart Cities and Communities Initiative?

Answer: As this question is rather general it is not possible to give any reliable general theoretical answer.

The possibility of a conflict of interest can only be evaluated with respect to a concrete situation, concrete project, concrete team, etc. Should such a concrete situation arise, please do not hesitate to consult the Commission. The attention of the tenderers is - nevertheless - brought to the Article II.3 of the [Draft Service Contract](#) and section IV.1.2 of the [Tender Specifications](#).

Question 9: Is it envisaged by DG Energy or other parties to provide for sponsorships or other forms of support to cover e.g. possible travel expenses of participants to the high-level workshops, meetings and conferences organised within the Smart Cities Stakeholder Platform?

Answer: Please refer to question 5 of this FAQ.

Question 10: Regarding the submission of the tender: shall the inner envelope contain three separate envelopes for the technical, administrative and financial proposal respectively, or shall the three parts be included altogether in the same inner envelope?

Answer: You shall include all three parts in one inner envelope and you shall provide three separate copies of the entire tender as mentioned in the [Invitation To Tender](#), point 2. That inner envelope should be put in the outer envelope as mentioned in the [Invitation To Tender](#), point 3.

Question 11: Is it already possible for DG Energy to indicate which will be (and, in case, approximately when) the main energy conferences for 2012 and 2013 (including those related to the Smart Cities Initiative)?

Answer: No. All currently available information in this respect is provided in the [Tender Specifications](#).

Question 12: In order to complete the financial proposal, can the tenderer, for specific tasks where specific staff members cannot be clearly identified at this stage, propose a pool of experts under the same category, to be appointed to implement the tasks once the content has been agreed with the EC during the inception phase?

Answer: The information required under point III.2.3 of the [Tender Specifications](#) serves to understand how the offered price was calculated. It is therefore possible to propose a pool of experts under the respective category.

The estimations given by the respective tenderer shall – nevertheless – be as close as possible to the real setup. In this respect the Commission would still prefer estimations per team member, where possible

Question 13: Work package 4: is the website support expected for the total period of the 24 months or is it only supposed to take place during the implementation phase (of the contract)?

Answer: The answer can be found in the [Tender Specifications](#), section I.3.

It is written there, that the duration of the contract – 24 months – shall be used to develop, launch, maintain and finally transfer the whole Smart Cities Stakeholder Platform website to the respective EC services. The full transfer of the website shall thus be finished by the end of the contract not exceeding the total contract duration of 24 months.

Question 14: After this project, will the Smart Cities and Communities Initiative and the Smart Cities Stakeholder Platform continue to exist?

Answer: According to the [Tender Specifications](#), section I.3, the duration of the contract is 24 months. Nevertheless - the Smart Cities Stakeholder Platform may continue to exist and another contract may be envisaged depending on the needs. The Smart Cities and Communities Initiative – as part of the Strategic Energy Technology (SET) Plan – will continue to exist, too.

Question 15: What performance indicators will the Commission use to evaluate the success of the Initiative and the Platform?

Answer: As written in chapter I.3 of the [Tender Specifications](#) on top of page 8 "a set of performance indicators, proposed by the selected tenderer, will be agreed with the EC and used at later stages for assessing the outcomes of the Smart Cities Stakeholder Platform."

In other words: it is indeed the possible tenderer who shall propose appropriate performance indicators for the Smart Cities Stakeholder Platform.

As regards the Smart Cities and Communities Initiative – following the same approach as for the other European Industrial Initiatives of the Strategic Energy Technology (SET) Plan – a monitoring system will be proposed and developed by SETIS (SET Plan Information System) in collaboration with the Smart Cities Stakeholder Platform.

Question 16: 16a) What budget will the Smart Cities and Communities Initiative use to fund projects in cities?

16b) Will the projects be 100% financed or co-financed?

16c) If 100%, will this be under FP7?

16d) If so, what type of cost model will be used?

Answer: The funding of FP7 projects is not directly connected to the Smart Cities Stakeholder Platform. The platform will act mainly as a forum for possible stakeholders of the Smart Cities and Communities Initiative. As such it will support the European Commission e.g. by proposing possible actions and topics under the Smart Cities Initiative which can be (co-) funded with FP7 budget.

Question 17: When you write that "the proposed measures should aim at accelerating the deployment of low carbon technologies by creating frame conditions for reaching a critical mass that would make innovative solutions commercially interesting", are you referring to measures applied by the Platform, the Initiative, or stakeholders outside the Platform/Initiative?

Answer: In chapter I.3 of the [Tender Specifications](#), page 8 (WP2), last paragraph, we refer to measures taken by the European Commission.

The Smart Cities Stakeholder Platform supports the European Commission by proposing these measures, which ideally support "accelerating the deployment of low carbon technologies by creating frame conditions for reaching a critical mass that would make innovative solutions commercially interesting."

Question 18: 18a) Can the Covenant of Mayors, CIVITAS, CONCERTO and others be contractually obligated by the Commission to co-operate with the Smart Cities Initiative?

18b) What kind of support can be expected from these initiatives?

Answer: Ad 18a) A contractual obligation of other initiatives to support the Smart Cities Stakeholder Platform is not foreseen. The Commission - however – expects other initiatives and/or platforms to be taken into account by possible tenderers when creating/testing/operating the platform.

Ad 18b) The European Commission expects a broad support from all mentioned initiatives, as regards the kind of support the selected tenderer shall explore these opportunities in close collaboration with the European Commission.

Question 19: 19a) What type of actors is allowed to apply to this call for tender?

19b) Can it be a private actor (e.g. an industrial company)?

Answer: Ad 19a) Any types of actors are allowed as long as they fulfil the conditions set out in the [Tender Specifications](#).

Ad 19b) Yes, as long as they fulfil the conditions set out in the [Tender Specifications](#).

Question 20: Shall the candidate be a consortium, or an individual actor?

Answer: Both forms consortia or individual companies are accepted as long as they fulfil the conditions set out in the [Tender Specifications](#).

Question 21: Did you have already some express of interest?

Answer: The call for tender is not yet closed but we had a number of questions which let us assume that there is an interest in this call for tender.

Question 22: Does the initiative "Smart City" examine information technology (ICT) as a technical subject, along with water management and public transport, or as a parallel subject, which shall be handled similarly to the alleviation of regulatory barriers, innovation in the organization, etc?

Answer: Both.

The ICT sector has in fact at least two main dimensions of interest for the Smart Cities Platform: a technical and an organisational/regulatory dimension. For that reason the potential tenderer should address both dimensions. The ICT as technical dimension should be considered in its applications for energy, transport and water management.

Question 23: On the first page (3) of the [Tender Specifications](#) the users of the platform are described as "the stakeholders primarily involved in actions at local level".

On the next page (4), it is written "Public Authorities at EU, national and local level as well as the industry and the research and financing community".

On the next page (5), users have evolved again to "City authorities; Energy agencies and regulators; Technology providers [...] and existing related Technology Platforms; EU Member States' and Associated Countries' representatives (including Ministries of energy, research, economy and transport); Industry/Companies; Research community; Associations, Networks, Alliances, NGOs [...] such as EUROCITIES [...], the Covenant of Mayors office [...], etc.," and "consultants and practitioners [...]".

These latter definitions are much broader than originally mentioned local members of the platform. Are there any guidelines on the basis of which such a wide group of stakeholders can be prioritised?

Answer: No. There are no guidelines for these tasks to be taken into account.

Clarification: the Smart Cities Stakeholder Platform shall be primarily designed for the needs of local stakeholders and at the same time should relate and build on the experience of other important stakeholders on national and/or EU level. It will be an important task of the Smart Cities Stakeholder Platform to structure the information flow between the various stakeholders and to optimize it.

Question 24: When it is written: the "platform is expected to propose and provide organisational support for the implementation of actions", does that mean that the parties involved in the tender will have to support the parties involved in managing their projects?

If not this kind of support is meant, please clarify this point and inform who exactly is entitled to receive this support.

Answer: Not directly.

The platform is expected to support the European Commission in addressing the main issues of the Smart Cities and Communities initiative in terms of e.g. the preparation of topics for calls for proposals. It shall also serve as an information provider towards potential and existing beneficiaries as well as European Commission personnel involved in project management and ensure the commitment of stakeholders to the proposed actions.

Question 25: In the third working package the following is to be implemented: "a monitoring system which will enable the monitoring of the impact of the projects carried out by the Smart Cities and Communities Initiative".

25a) Does this mean that for this initiative a separate budget is foreseen?

25b) If so, how much is such a budget, on what basis the projects are awarded and whether the contractors will also be responsible for their administration?

If our reasoning is wrong, please clarify.

Answer: Ad 25a) The projects supporting the Smart Cities and Communities Initiative are (co-)financed with FP7 means.

Ad 25b) The possible FP7 budget for these projects is not yet fixed and – moreover – not subject to this tender procedure.

Clarification: the potential contractor is not involved in the administration of projects (including the respective budget) but will develop in co-operation with SETIS (SET Plan information system) a monitoring system to gather information on the progress/success/impact of projects and activities in the context of the Smart Cities and Communities initiative to give a feedback concerning EC activities, which shall be used to improve future activities in the Smart Cities and Communities context.