

INVITATION TO TENDER NO. TREN/D3/442 - 2008
Support services for the Covenant of Mayors

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. Page 18 of TS¹ (III.2.1): *However, the subcontractor(s) shall not be required to fill in or provide those documents when the services represent less than 20% of the contract.*

Does this mean that no subcontractor needs to provide those documents if the total subcontracted services represent less than 20% of the total contract?

- Yes

... **or** only those subcontractors to whom the services subcontracted are less than 20% of the total contract are not required to fill in those documents?

- Yes, both questions are consistent

2. Page 19 of TS (III.2.3 last point): *Other categories of costs, indicating the nature of the cost, the total amount, the unit price and the quantity*

What does "other categories of costs" mean here? What types of costs should we detail here?

- In general all other costs except staff and travel costs (for printing, hiring a venue, etc...). This cost category should be separate, not as subcategory under personal costs.

3. Page 22 of TS (IV.1.2 point a): *Tenderers must declare (...) that they do not have any conflict of interest...*

Do we need to declare this simply by a declaration on honour? Or, should we use a specific template?

- Declaration in Annex IV

4. Page 23 of TS (IV.1.3 points 1 & 2) : *(...) each tenderer (...) shall provide a declaration on their honour (...) attached in Annex 4 (...) within 15 calendar days after notification (...)*

Do we need to submit this declaration alongside with the application or only afterwards in case of success?

- Declaration shall be submitted together with application and signed by every partner, or each member of the consortia incl leader. This is compulsory.

¹ Tender Specifications, attached to the Invitation to tender, published on http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/energy_transport/tenders/index_en.htm

5. Page 24 of TS (IV.2.1): (...) *statement of overall turnover and turnover relating to the relevant services for the last three financial years*

What definition should be given to "relevant services"? In case of networks of local authorities, can we consider that our entire turnover is considered to be 'relevant' for these services?

- Turnover of the network related to energy, transport and climate protection issues is understood as "relevant".

Other questions:

6. Do the possible subcontractors need to be identified already in our proposal?

- Yes, for the transparency and clarity of the tender. See Article II.13 of the Annex 5 to the TS (Draft service contract).

7. When choosing the subcontractors, are there any specific procurement rules because of this invitation to tender or shall we only need to comply with normal national regulations?

- No special procurement rules, it is up to the tenderers to set up the best consortia including selection of subcontractors. See Article II.13 of the Annex 5 to the ToR (Draft service contract). Even if part of work will be subcontracted, tenderer is fully responsible for the results.

8. Does the European Commission have a schedule of standard day rates for staff time, which the successful contractor would be expected to apply? For example, are there standard day rates for a Project Director, Project Manager, Senior Consultant or other grades of staff who may be included in a bid?

- No standard day rates, it is up to bidders to offer the price

9. Do the "Supporting Structures" qualify for any EC funding if they sign an agreement on the Covenant of Mayors?

- Yes. The Covenant is fundamentally in the common interest of cities and the EU. The ultimate vocation of the secretariat is to provide services to the cities. Furthermore, as there are no financial contributions to the cities, there is no room for conflict of interest.

10. We are interested in participating as well as partner; so we'd like to know where to take information about other proposals already sent to be joined.

- As this is a tendering procedure, it is up to each tenderer to set up the consortia, if relevant. The Commission does not provide information about other tenderers.

11. We need more detailed explanations about the compensations of workers involved in the project, specifying the meaning of: 2250 equivalent person -days;

- No standard day rates, it is up to bidders to offer the price for the workload foreseen, based on their experience and capacity.

12. We'd like to know if there is a standard form to be filled relating to budget and the workplan.

- No standard template, however, tenders must respect the form and content requested in Terms of Reference, page 18.

13. Is there any specific geographical scope (or limit to the EU27) that we need to consider? May we for instance include the Associate Countries considered under the 7th Framework Programme (e.g Israel), or the newly formed Union for the Mediterranean that include Tunisia for example.

- The Covenant of Mayors covers EU member states, Candidate countries and EEA countries.

14. Could the Commission indicate the desired quantities for the promotional material (videos, articles, leaflets etc.)? The Commission's preferences will affect the team to be set up, (balance of audiovisual experts, journalists etc).

- There is no pre-conception on desired quantities, as the final balance will greatly affect the tender's approach. Anyway it is good to bear in mind that several hundred cities are very likely to be contacted, and that the Covenant central events are likely to attract audiences over 1000 people at a time.

15. Is there a separate budget reserved for production costs (printing, translation etc.) in addition to the man days specified?

- No. Tenderers are expected to bid on the basis of the workload at their prices plus other expenditure, with a fix final price.

16. How many high visibility top -level annual events does the Commission expect the contractor to organize per year? How many of these will require public welcome ceremonies?

- One public welcome top -level ceremony per year, during the EUSEW. The tenderers may decide in their technical proposal to organise side events around the ceremony, separate events at other periods of the year or a combination of both.

17. What is the expected duration of the annual events (half a day, 1 day, 2 days etc?)

- For the ceremony itself should not be more than one day.

18. What is the difference between the high visibility top events and the annual events?

- None.

19. Regarding the workshops, as the number required is variable, does the Commission wish to have a price per workshop?

- Rather a sound technical proposal justifying the selected number of workshops in order to cover the most important issues around the Covenant .

20. Representatives of network of cities are particularly invited to get involved in this tender, either directly or through co -operation agreements: Would the Commission not see a potential conflict of interest in the case of a direct involvement of the above mentioned network of cities (as they may be representing the interest of cities signatories of the Covenant)?

- No, the Covenant is fundamentally in the common interest of cities and the EU. The ultimate vocation of the secretariat is to provide services to the cities. Furthermore, as there are no financial contributions to the cities, there is no room for conflict of interest.

21) Is there a draft standard contract between the Commission and the Supporting Structures or will each be negotiated separately?

- No standard contract. Cooperation will be held based on agreement between the supporting structures and Commission services. Methodology for this is a task to be proposed by the tenderers (see task 6 of the Tender Specifications and information on the:

http://ec.europa.eu/energy/climate_actions/mayors/doc/adhesion_procedure_structures_en.pdf).

22) Will the Secretariat have an involvement in the terms of the contract between the Commission and the Supporting Structures i.e. so that it fits with the overall strategy of the Secretariat in working with the Supporting Structures?

- Tenderers shall propose the methodology for best possible and most efficient work with the Supporting Structures.

23) Will there be conditions for the contract between the Commission and the Supporting Structures attached such as performance criteria, quality assurance?

- Methodology for this task is to be proposed by the tenderers (see task 6 of the Tender Specifications). It is not the aim to subcontract Supporting structures for delivery of core results relevant to the Tender.

24) Is there a limit to the number of supporting structures?

- No

25) When submitting the different administrative and financial documents (proof of registration, balance sheet, etc.) which cannot be originals, does the Commission expect:

a) simple copies?

b) certified copies as for example in EIE calls i.e. bearing the mention « Corresponding to the original » + stamp of organisation + date + signature of the organisation's authorised representative?

- Simple copies

26) How shall the cost structure be presented in the tender?

Tenderers shall present the fixed final price of the bid, in EUROS, according to page 19, III.2.3 Section three: Financial proposal of the Tender Specifications. The price breakdown shall be as follows:

1. Personal costs (presented through daily rate and number of days – all personnel-connected costs included), for each staff member and in total
2. Travel and subsistence costs
3. Other costs, indicating the nature of the cost, the total amount, the unit price and the quantity
4. Subcontracting – definition of foreseen subcontractors and subcontracted amounts, including justification, is compulsory.

27) What is the definition of a city (for the purposes of this tender). Is there a minimum size?

- No minimum size please read carefully the information provided at:

http://ec.europa.eu/energy/climate_actions/mayors/doc/adhesion_procedure_structures_en.pdf.

28) The contract for supporting structures is for public authorities. Are other types of organisations excluded e.g. not for profit, NGOs ?

- The written agreement will be concluded with public administrations, see : http://ec.europa.eu/energy/climate_actions/mayors/doc/adhesion_procedure_structures_en.pdf.

29. We would welcome some clarification for page 24 of Tender Specifications, first lines of IV.2.2 Technical and Professional capacity - References required:

"... main recent projects carried out... **by the staff who would propose to carry out the work...**"

Does this mean that the references that tenderers quote must be in direct relation with the staff proposed?

- Yes, preferably, in order to demonstrate the skills of the project team

30. What is required from tenderers with regard to the Annex 1 Identification of Tenderer form, which asks for a "description of statutory social security cover (at the level of the Member State of origin) and non - statutory cover (supplementary professional indemnity insurance)" ?

1) Is there a standard form of words for this?

2) Is the second clause (non -statutory cover) the only part relating to 'natural persons'?

- 1) As the social security systems are not harmonized and vary among EU Member states, no standard words or template is used to describe the statutory social security cover. You are requested to apply the system used in the Member state of origin.

- 2) As specified by the footnote, yes, this counts only to natural persons.

31. I have a technical question regarding the subcontracting. It says that if a subcontractor's share exceeds 20% of the overall project budget he needs to provide all the necessary paperwork like proof of finance etc.

Just to clarify: this only applies to a single subcontractor charging more than 20% of the overall project budget to the tenderer or the consortium. If there are many subcontractors, which cumulatively exceed the 20%, but none of them exceeding the 20% individually this shall not be a problem, correct?

- Correct. See as well question No. 1 of the FAQ above.

32. A question regarding the tender content. It says under II.2.2 Task 2 (page 9) that "the website structure has to be compatible with the Commission's website Europa for an easier integration". To what extent is this expected? Should the layout be the same, should all the navigation headings to be found on the COM website be copied?

- This means, that the whole website should be easily transferable to the Commission's domain. At present the Commission uses "Documentum". There are no conditions concerning layout and/or design.

33. On page 17 under point II.4 of the tender specifications it is defined that "groupings (or consortium) must specify the company or person heading the project and must also submit a copy of the document authorising this company or person to submit a bid."

Is there a special text or template for the document authorising a company or person to submit a bid?

- No template, normally a letter delegating the power to act on behalf of consortium to the consortium leader, signed by consortium members is enough. It could be i.e. a commonly used "Letter of commitment".

34. With regard to the Declaration of Honour: are all the sub-contractors required to sign this, or only those whose share of the overall fee is greater than 20%?

- See answers 1 and 2 above. Subcontractors whose services represent less than 20% of the contract shall not be required to provide the Declaration.

35. The members of our team are located in several different countries: logistically it will be virtually impossible for the whole team to sign the same sheet of paper. Is it acceptable for the different sub-consultants to sign the required forms, turn them into PDFs and for the digital versions to be submitted with the tender?

- Yes. Copies are acceptable.

36. Documentum is a so called Enterprise Content Management, meaning it could handle not only a website, but also document management, archiving, version control etc. in an enterprise. This is a pretty big thing and clearly for an organisation useful which needs document check-in/check-out etc., but it looks to me as if the task "website" mentioned in the call just requires a small web-content management tool to have many consortium partners updating content etc. I have seen other EC-project-websites in the sphere of DG TREN that use these web-content management systems, like open source program Typo3. Assuming it is possible to integrate Typo3-content into Documentum after the 30 months of the project, would this be a sufficient technology to use or is it compulsory to use Documentum?

Ideally, the project should start from the beginning in Documentum under EUROPA URL. The Commission will not accept to integrate the Typo3-content into Documentum.

After the contract (or better saying before the end of the contract) the Commission will give the access to Documentum system to the contractor so that he will be able to transfer him self the content in the Commission system.

This means that +/- 4 months before the end of the contract we will start the procedure for the "Security Convention for remote intervention".

This is a long procedure with COMM and DIGIT that provides at the end a "token" (= secured access) to the contractor in order to work on the Commission web server (it will not be possible to give this access to all the partners for updating them content).

This means also that the Covenant of Mayors will have the same banner of all the other energy websites, and also the same template, design and navigation tools.