

Call for Tender VT/2015/023

Questions and answers [last update: 4 September 2015]

General questions:

Question (Q)1: Where a potential tenderer has only provided services to the European Commission, and where these services are still ongoing what is the situation in relation to a certificate of satisfactory execution referred to in 11.2.C?

Answer (A)1: These certificates can only be submitted for completed services at the time of the deadline for submission of tenders. In this case, the tenderer will not be able to submit such a certificate.

Q2: In relation to 6.2 of the specifications: - the first bullet states that the professional fees expressed as a unit price for each expert proposed should include the contractors costs of participation in meetings. The second bullet states that any expenditure other than professional fees, such as travel and accommodation expenses of participants to meetings and events and contractors staff related to the activities under this contract. Is this a contradiction with what is stated in relation to the contractors costs for participation in meetings referred to in the first bullet? May experts travel costs to specific events and honoraria relating to their participation in specific events also be included under this heading?

A2: No, there is no contradiction. The first bullet point refers to professional fees expressed as the number of person-days multiplied by the unit price. In addition, the contractor's costs for participation in meetings must be included in these professional fees. The second bullet point relates to any other expenditure not included in the professional fee.

Q3: Concerning the activity "Promotional material" of Lot1, is the tenderer expected actually produce this promotional material or only to make the creative work (design)? If production is expected what are the quantities that need to be produced and where should they be delivered?

A3: The contractor should produce and make the creative work. It is up to the tenderer to make a proposal with regard to the quantities to be produced and where it should be delivered. However, content should be delivered to the Commission prior to dissemination.

Q4: Concerning requested Evidence for lot 2 (11.2 Technical and professional capacity criteria and evidence) our understanding is that we must prove our experience in the field of vocational education and training policies, with particular reference to qualification and credit but there is no need to have projects of minimum 250.000 euro (meaning smaller projects in volume are also eligible). Is our understanding correct?

A4: Yes.

Q5: Concerning the presentations of the CVs of our team, is there a preferred template to be used (i.e. europass)?

A5: It is up to the tenderer to use the most appropriate CV format.

Q6: In the presentation of our financial offer, do we need to indicate the man-months and

the price of the Ad hoc experts to be used (i.e. Activity “Organisation and management of a working group”). And if yes, what is their months/man quantity?

A6: Professional fees and other costs need to be expressed as the number of person-days multiplied by the unit price per working day for each expert proposed.

Q7: *Topic: in principle the project must deal on development issues in coordination with another instrument or initiative, but what does it mean? What kind of topic- subject? We know all of them related with ECVET, but it is possible to concrete more?*

A7: 'Another instrument or initiative' can for example refer to EU tools in the field of Education and training.

Q8: *Will the PLA activities be conferences and workshops? We found some examples of PLA activities and PLA, forum and conference are not that different activities. Surely the same experts will attend most of them. We understand that in PLA we should organize workshops or similar in order to implement a kind of training, but we would like to confirm it. We consider that the more we concrete in the proposal, the better.*

A8: It is up to the tenderer to propose an appropriate methodology for the PLA.

Q9: *The tender says up to 20 participants covered by the ECVET secretariat. Does ECVET pay for their attendance or is it only responsible of sending participants? Will it be an open activity to be offered? 20 participants is the minimum? Is there also a maximum number of participants? Do participants have to pay for a fee? If any expert comes to another country, who will pay for his expenses? Themselves? If someone participates like a speaker or collaborator, in case that they have to pay a fee, we understand that this fee won't be paid because they participate at the conference / training like an expert? It is possible to hire experts out of the consortium to be trainers/experts?*

A9: This means that the contractor will have to pay for maximum 20 participants. It is expected that participants do not pay fee. The prior approval of the Commission is needed in case experts outside the consortium would be used.

Q10: *Where do we have to organize it? Only in Barcelona or also in every partner's country, being M&M the responsible of the organization everywhere?*

A10: The place of the event is not yet decided.

Q11: *We are supposed to have budget to do the activity but, how do we have to manage it? We know that we have to keep all the invoices and expenses to justify the activity, but since the budget to implement it can be a high amount, do we have to prepare and justify a part of it and after that we will receive all the quantity? In case we won't use all budget approved, will we have to refund it or maybe we could change amounts among different activities?*

A11: Please refer to paragraph 7 of tender specifications and also article II.15 of the model contract (reporting and payment conditions).

Q12: *Regarding the Declaration of Honour, there is request to fill it. What to do with this? Do we need to fill it and signed it? If yes by whom?*

A12: Yes, It needs to be filled in by the person representing the legal entity. Additional explanations can be found in the template of the Declaration.

Q13: *I need some more clarifications, is about the Project Manager. It states in the ToR, among others, experience in project of a similar size (at least 250.000 euros) and coverage (geographical scope at least half of the one subject to this call for tender).*

a) *Am I right to say that the “at least half of the one subject” is 14 EU member states?*

A13a) Yes.

b) *The number of the “at least half of the one subject” should have been covered within one project of at least 250.000 euros OR it can be two completely different projects of at least 250.000 euros and each one covers e.g. 7 countries and the other one another 7 countries OR even three different projects of at least 250.000 euros and each one covered 5 different member states which by adding them up meets the “at least half of the one subject” number?*

A13b): According to point 11.2, b, first bullet point, the project Manager must prove at least 10 years' experience in project management, including overseeing project delivery, quality control of delivered service, client orientation and conflict resolution experience in project of a similar size (at least € 250.000) and coverage (geographical scope at least half of the one subject to this call for tender), with experience in management of team of at least 4 people.

c) *Finally, am I right that the Project Manager can be a different person from the Contractor's legal Representative asked in the ToR to be specified in the Covering Letter? Is it possible to be the same person?*

A 13c) Yes. Project manager is part of the team responsible for project implementation. Contractor's legal representative is the person authorized to sign contracts, to represent the tenderer in dealings with third parties, and to act on behalf of the tenderer in any legal proceedings with third parties.

Q14: *In the Evidence for the Economic and Financial capacity, do we need to provide all four listed Evidences or is enough to provide ONLY “the profit & loss account and the balance sheet” for which the accounts is closed? In fact the “professional risk indemnity insurance” is not applicable to us while the point of “Presentation of balance sheets” is included in the first point “profit & loss accounts and balance sheets”.*

A14: As indicated in section 11.1 of ToR, a copy of the profit & loss account and balance sheets for the last two years for which accounts have been closed should be submitted. If the professional risk indemnity insurance is not applicable in your case, you should include a suitable justification in your tender.

Q15: *In the Evidence of services provided in the past three years you ask us to provide “certificates of satisfactory execution”. However for most of the work we have done on VET are projects through LLP and Erasmus+ and therefore we not have “certificates of execution”. Instead we have the Contract Number and/or project references. Is it ok to provide these reference number instead of “certificates of execution”?*

A15: You can provide a list of projects with contract references, exact date, total value and recipients, as well as results of these projects.

Questions to Lot 2 – ECVET:

Q16: Does the subcontractor have to be chosen using a tender process?

A16: Not necessarily, it depends on the national rules which are applicable to the contractor.

Q17: Does the subcontractor have to be chosen before the due date of submitting the offer?

A17: Not necessarily. If chosen before the submission and included in the offer, awarding the contract to a tenderer who included named subcontractors in its tender amounts to agreeing to the listed subcontractors

Q18: Can the subcontractor be a firm with an existing subcontract with the contractor, chosen on the basis of a transparent and legally compliant request for tender process?

A18: Yes.

Q19: What does "Reimbursement of participants by the Commission" mean in terms of the contractor's responsibility? Are there administrative arrangements that the contractor is responsible for in facilitating reimbursement? Does the financing of this reimbursement come out of the contractor's budget?

A19: "Reimbursement of participants by the Commission" means that the Commission will do the necessary administrative arrangements and reimburse costs for participants.

Q20: Does "covered by the ECVET secretariat" mean that these expenses are covered by the contractor's budget?

A20: Yes

Q21: What is the maximum number of participants foreseen for one PLA?

A21: Up to 20 participants per PLA.

Q22: Do 80 participants of the annual ECVET Forum Conference purchase their own travel tickets which are then reimbursed by the ECVET Secretariat, or does the contractor arrange for the purchase of travel tickets?

A22: Both procedures are acceptable.

Q23: Is there a cost incurred for venue space when organizing the 3-4 working group meetings in the Commission premises? Does the DG decide on the site for this meeting space?

A23: Meetings at the Commission premises are free of charge and the Commission decides which Commission meeting rooms will be used.

Q24: Where will the PLAs be held?

A24: This is not yet decided.

Q25: What does "The contractor would only provide content related support in the form of short training opportunities or interventions in events, without any involvement in the logistic organization, which remains the responsibility of the demanding body" mean in

terms of the contractor's responsibility? Whether the demanding body covers the travel and accommodation costs or experts' fees?

A25: The contractor is not expected to cover any logistic cost. The contractor will only pay the expert fees.

Q26: What type of costs incurs the inception/ interim meetings and the meeting on the draft final report? Where these meetings will be held?

A26: The meetings will be held at the Commission premises in Brussels. The contractor should pay for their own transport costs.

Q27: How detailed the presentation of financial offer should be? Can the tenderer indicate a total price per particular meeting or it is requested to show unit prices for each category for example the cost of one ticket, one coffee break, one dinner, the rental of one workshop room, etc.?

A27: The financial offer should indicate total costs for each meeting or activity according to the timetable of project implementation. Moreover, each meeting/activity should contain details of estimate costs, i.e. description of costs category (e.g. room rental), unit price (e.g.1000 EUR), number of units (e.g.2), unit type (e.g. working day) and the total for this cost category. Costs related to transport and subsistence for each event should indicate the estimate per meal and ticket.

Q28: Whether the standard requirements are defined for hotels?

A28: There are no standard requirements for hotels.

Q29: Invoicing schedule: When comparing the Tender specifications with the Draft Contract provided in the tender documents, we have realised an inconsistency regarding the invoicing schedule. The contract mentions 70% interim payment and balance on completion, the Tender specifications mention three payment points (30%-40%-30%). Please could you clarify?

A29: Point 7 of the tender specifications and articles I.4.2 and I.10 Other special conditions of the draft contract must be read together. According to point 7 of the tender specifications, the payment will be made in 3 instalments: a first interim (30%), a second interim (40%) and a balance (remaining 30%). According to article I.4.2 the interim payment will be equal to 70% but article I.10 specifies that the contractor shall submit two invoices as interim payment (30 + 40 = 70%).

Q30: Activity ECVET users' group meetings. Regarding the 5 special participants to whom the contractor may be asked to cover the costs of participation

- a. Are the 5 special participants for each meeting OR 5 in total for all 4 meetings per year?*
- b. When we say to cover the cost, do you mean flights tickets and hotel or do you mean to pay them and professional fee?*

A30: Sub a.: This should be read as 5 participants for each meeting.
sub b.: This concerns participants other than the experts that the contractor may select, therefore costs only refer to travel and subsistence, not professional fees.

Q31: Activity ECVET network meeting. The question is the same for the 5 special participants to these events.

A31: The reply to question 30 also applies to Q31.

Q32: Activity ECVET forum. Who is going to cover the Reimbursement of the 200-250 participants each year?

A32: As indicated, 80 participants should be covered (transport tickets and hotel rooms) by the contractor.
The others will be either reimbursed by the Commission or will cover their own costs.

Q33: Activity PLA. When it says "Up to 20 participants, covered by the ECVET secretariat", it means that the Secretariat will cover the reimbursement OR it means it is going just to have the people to participate but the reimbursement will be covered by the Contractor? And secondly how many people in this event assumed to participate in total?

A33: The contractor will cover transport tickets and hotel rooms for up to 20 participants. An average of 8 further participants can be estimated, including the contractor's staff and experts and staff from the Commission and its agencies.

Q34: Activity Direct Expert support to bodies outside the Commission. Who is responsibility of the reimbursement and Professional Fee of the Experts to provide the training in these events?

A34: The contractor should cover the professional fee of the expert, while transport and hotel should be covered by the demanding body.

Q35: Activity Setting up a network of experts. Do you mean here the minimum 3 Ad hoc Experts non-permanent staff of the contractor OR do we have to set up a wider network of Experts? And who is going to cover reimbursement and their professional fee?

A35: There is no requirement or recommendation as to the number of experts to be included in the network, which need to be able to provide the scope of expertise required by the tasks to be carried out.
There also is no requirement or recommendation as to the number of external experts to be included in the network. It will depend on how much expertise is available with the contractor's staff members.
All costs related to the experts – transport, subsistence and fee – should be covered by the contractor (unless special cases, see previous question).

Q36: Who is the ECVET Secretariat. In the ToR it is not defined. I mean is the ECVET secretariat and the Contractor identical terms? The same question for the EQAVET secretariat.

A36: The ECVET Secretariat and contractor are identical terms. The same applies to EQAVET Secretariat.