Questions and Answers regarding call for tender N° ENTR/2007/049
Collection, analysis and exploitation of results obtained from innovation projects

(updated 06.05.2008)

Question 1:
I would like to ask the following question for clarification: Under the selection criteria 2.9 is stated: "The tenderer must be ISO 9001 (or equivalent) certified. In the case of joint offers, this criterion only applies to the designated leader of the grouping or consortium." Is a company that does not have a ISO certification eligible if there is an documented and working internal quality management system (e.g. for system development and testing) in place?

Answer to Question 1:
An ISO 9001:2000 certificate proves that your Quality Management System has been certified against a best practice standard and found compliant. The ISO certificate requirement serves solely to establish confidence or assurance through an independent third party that the supplier possesses adequate professional and technical capacity. Issued by a third party certification body/registrar, the certificate lets customers know they can trust that you have implemented the necessary internal processes to meet obligations. The internationally recognized ISO 9001:2000 standard is generic. It is not a product standard, but applicable to any manufacturing or service industry.

The phrase "or equivalent" used in selection criterion 2.9 as cited in the question above refers to the fact that certification by other schemes similar to ISO 9001 is also acceptable. Consequently, tenderers that have no such external certification are not eligible.

Question 2:
Tender Specifications, page 34 of 55, *"Users cannot be expected to install any additional software or have cameras or microphones attached to their computers."* From this statement we understand that Tenderers should not propose a solution that requires from the users *"to install any additional software or have cameras or microphones attached to their computers"*.
We appreciate, though, that in case a proposed solution covers all requested functionality as stated in the Tender Specifications, and in addition includes advanced functionalities that enable a user with microphone and/or to camera to use the resulting advanced / innovative services, this would be considered as an acceptable solution. Could you please confirm that our understanding is correct?

Answer to Question 2:
Tenderers are expected to propose solutions that correspond to the requirements to functionalities as set out in the tender specifications. However, tenderers may include additional functionalities that they deem useful and appropriate and which do not impose any additional requirements on users.

Question 3:
An important aspect in the preparation of the Tenderers' approach and proposal is the one of the budget distribution among the different work packages. In the previous Europe-INNOVA (ENTR/05/023) Call for Tenders, DG ENTR assisted prospective Tenderers by presenting an

indicative distribution of the budget among the four (4) work packages. This is not the case in the current ENTR/07/046 procurement procedure, although all other aspects of the procurement process remain the same. Moreover, we understand that the Commission and DG ENTR offer such information in most of their CfTs.

We would therefore like to request from DG ENTR to provide Tenderers with an indicative budget per work package. This is highly necessary especially as regards WP 2, which does not define the exact work that will be requested by the Contractor throughout the contract (the activities related to the "further development/evolution" of the portal have to be defined by DG ENTR in detail for the whole duration of the contract (2 + 1 years) and/or define a specific budget per year for all work under this WP).

Answer to Question 3:
In order to allow tenderers to present bids that, in their view, are the most cost-effective, i.e. offer the best value for money, it was found to be inappropriate to require tenderers to adhere to specific budget allocations per work package and/or time period.

Question 4:
In WP 2 it is stated that *"The Contractor shall therefore allocate at least 20% of the cost for the software of the release that puts the full functionality specified in the bid, available for changes over the life-style of the software."*
Could you please specify to which of the following does this 20% refer to:
a) the overall budget proposed by the Tenderer for the implementation of the contract (all WPs) throughout the three years (2 + 1).
b) the overall cost of the system that supports the full functionality specified in the bid.
c) If none of the above, please specify in detail.

Answer to Question 4:
The 20% referred to in WP 2 as cited above refers to option b) in the question, i.e. the 20% should be calculated on the basis of the overall cost of the system described in the tender specifications.

Question 5:
Could you please specify the exact requirements as regards the hosting of the platform, its system administration, telecommunication costs (bandwidth), etc.? What are the minimum requirements of DG ENTR? Is it possible for DG ENTR to propose a specific price range for these services?

Answer to Question 5:
The tender specifications contain the expected functionality, performance and other user requirements in WP 2. Potential tenderers should propose the technical implementation they consider the most appropriate to meet the specified requirements in the overall context of the tender. It is not possible to indicate a range of prices, because it depends on the technical choices made by the tenderers.

Question 6:

Specifications document, page 9 of 55, par. 1.12. 'SUBCONTRACTING': *'Consequently, the bid must clearly identify the subcontractor(s) and document their willingness to accept the tasks and their acceptance of the terms and conditions set out in 1.9 above, in particular article II.17 of the standard service contract by returning the form in annex 5.5, filled in and signed'*
We understand that the mention in annex 5.5. is a clerical mistake.
Subcontractors need to fill in and sign the form in annex 5.4 'SUBCONTRACTOR/LETTER OF INTENT' only. Please confirm that our understanding is correct.

Answer to Question 6:
We confirm that the reference to annex 5.5 on page 9 of the tender specifications is a clerical error and that the correct reference is 5.4.

Question 7:
Specifications document, pages 10 & 11 of 55, par. 2.1 :
'Tenders must be signed by the tenderer or his duly authorised representative.'
….
'Tenders must be clear and concise, with continuous page numbering, and assembled in a coherent fashion (e.g. bound or stapled, etc.)'

(a) Can you please indicate if a signed cover letter along with the duly signed various tender forms are sufficient or the tenderer has to sign each page of its proposal?

(b) Could you please specify if it is mandatory for Tenderers to follow a continuous page numbering in their offers?

(c) Can you please indicate if all of the types of Tender page numbering presented below will be accepted?
   Example 1:
   1, 2, 3, 4, …, 3589 (i.e. the tender has a total of 3,589 pages)
   Example 2:
   I-1,2,3,… 457   - II-1,2,3,…, 1875   - III-1,2,3,…,87, etc. (where I, II, III, etc. stands for Section One, Section Two, Section Three, etc.)
   Example 3:
   I-A-1,2,3,…54   - I-B-1,2,3,…,87   - I-C-1,2,3,…,280 etc. (In this example, Section One is composed of three documents, namely document A (pages 1-54), document B (pages 1-87) and document C (pages 1-280).

(d) Should document separators, index tags, dossier covers, cover letter, etc. also be included in the continuous page numbering?

Answer to Question 7:

(a) The tenderer or his duly authorised representative should sign the cover letter as well as the financial offer provided in the tender.

(b) As stated in the tender specifications, we confirm that a continuous page numbering must be followed.

(c) In our view, continuous page numbering is illustrated by your example 1, but other clearly structured and continuous numbering systems will be accepted.

(d) No.

Question 8:

In case of a Consortium interested to participate in the Europe INNOVA CfT, we understand that the grouping as a whole is responsible to respond to the Selection Criteria related to the Technical and Professional Capacity and not each distinct legal entity to each separate criterion. Could you please confirm that our understanding is correct? If this is not the case, please specify which of the criteria 2.1 to 2.9 and b) to g) (of pages 20 and 21 of 55 of the Tendering specifications) should be replied by each legal entity (either partner or subcontractor or even freelancer) and not by the grouping as a whole?

Answer to Question 8:
We confirm that the Selection Criteria related to Technical and Professional Capacity must be met by the grouping as a whole and not by each individual legal entity.

Question 9:

Tender Specifications, Page 34, *Furthermore, regular user surveys should be carried out to assess the level of satisfaction of visitors to the public Web portal and of the Europe INNOVA partners on the workspace."*
Are the above surveys intended to be carried out solely over the web or is it up to the tenderer to suggest web surveys as well as one-to-one surveys with selected public users and workspace partners? In the case of one-to-one surveys, where will they be carried out, at the Contractor's premises or at the Commission?

Answer to Question 9:
The tenderer may suggest the survey methodology he finds most appropriate. However, activities to be carried out under such surveys should not be foreseen to take place at the Commission's premises.

Question 10:

Tender Specifications, Page 34, *"The Contractor shall respect the graphic style and design guidelines applicable to Europe INNOVA."*
Does the above imply that the tenderer will not have to provide (and finally implement) a new graphical proposal for the public and collaborative sites?
Is there (or will there be) a graphical style guide with detailed guidelines provided to the contractor?

Answer to Question 10:
As set out in the tender specifications page 31, "minimum functionalities required for the **public Web portal",** second indent, tenderers are expected to adapt the existing web portal structure to the new structure which will require changes to the design of the website but not the graphical style. A graphical style guide with be provided to the contractor.

Question 11:

Tender Specifications, Page 35, *"Functionality and/or design updates shall therefore be foreseen throughout the contractual period. The Contractor shall therefore allocate at least 20% of the cost for the software of the release that puts the full functionality specified in the bid, available for changes over the life-cycle of the software."*
Do the "design updates" refer to graphical design updates or just software design updates?

Answer to Question 11:
The design updates refer to software design.

Question 12:

"The new approach builds on the existing Sectoral Architecture which will be directed towards Thematic Challenges by establishing European Innovation Platforms addressing issues of knowledge transfer, skills, incubation, standards, finance, etc. in a consistent and strategic manner."
We understand that the classification of the new projects/networks will still be performed in terms of Sectors. In addition and similarly to the current Europe INNOVA structure (where Financing networks, Cluster networks, etc, are classified under separate portal sections) a separate higher level classification will be maintained in terms of Thematic Challenges, like the ones described above. Please, confirm.

Answer to Question 12:
The tender specifications, page 31, indicate that "The thematic structure shall be adapted to reflect the structure set out in section 4.1 of the present terms of reference" and they also state that "The detailed representation of the thematic structure […] will be agreed upon with the Commission." The tender specifications furthermore specify in the paragraphs that refer to the migration of the current Web sites that "The presentation of the thematic structure, […] shall be maintained as a library for references to past projects and their output" which means that the legacy systems shall present to the user the thematic structure of the current Web sites.

Question 13:

The new architecture is built with proper organization of the following challenges and horizontal services:
- Sectoral Innovation Watch
- European Cluster Observatory
- Innovation Panels
- Services
- Eco-innovation
- Cluster cooperation
- Horizontal and exploratory actions (horizontal to the others)
- Europe Innova Communications (Horizontal to the whole structure)
Is "Services" anyhow related to the "Innovation and Services" section currently available on the Europe INNOVA Portal?
Could Sectoral Innovation Watch, European Cluster Observatory, Innovation Panels, Service, Eco-innovation, Cluster cooperation and Horizontal and exploratory actions, be considered as items of the same level in terms of their relation to the innovation projects/networks? Or is there a king of hierarchy among them, as well?

Answer to Question 13:
Yes, services is related to the current section "Innovation and Services".

The items you refer to are all of the same hierarchical level, i.e. there is no "king of hierarchy" among them.

Question 14:
"The new Web portal must include also the Standards networks sub-site"
We understand that the Standards will comprise one of the core Thematic Challenges in the new structure and all projects classified under this challenge will be provided with the same space, visibility and functionality as all other projects, obeying to the same design guidelines, thus not requiring the maintenance of two separate platforms. Please, confirm.

Answer to Question 14:
The tender specifications set out on page 35 that the current Web site http://standards.euinnova.org/ is one of two legacy Web sites that shall be migrated to the new Web site. The requirements for the standards-related Web site are therefore the same as for the Web site http://www.europe-innova.org/, set out on page 35. See also the answer to Question 12 above.

Question 15:
"projects may have their own website if they require functionality that goes beyond the provisions of WP2"
We understand that any Websites created by the projects separately, will not need to obey to the same design templates. The Europe INNOVA Portal will have to provide loose integration in terms of hyperlinks to these external tools/sites, from a dedicated space within the projects' mini portals.

Answer to Question 15:
The graphical design guidelines for possible separate Web sites will be the object of the specifications for those projects. Such specific Web systems shall indeed be reachable from the future Europe INNOVA Web portal for the latter to be able to fulfill its requirement to constitute "the dissemination tool of the initiative". The "advanced Web technologies which facilitate the use of the required functions, improve the co-operation and communication among the participants in the initiative" that shall be used for the technical implementation of such a functionality will depend on what the tenderer finds is the most cost-effective solution.

Question 16:
"the public part of the present (legacy) Europe Innova Web, must be an integral part of the thematic structure"
We understand that the current pages/content will not necessarily remain under the current sections but they will rather form part of the new sections (Thematic Challenges) as required. The actual structure of the Portal and the required reorganization of the current content will be performed in cooperation with the EC during the first phase of the project. Please, confirm.

Answer to Question 16:

We confirm that "the public part of the present (legacy) Europe INNOVA Web, must be an integral part of the thematic structure" in the respect of other requirements under WP2, including notably those referred to in Question 12. The legacy thematic structure shall accordingly be kept and be accessible as such under the new structure whose "detailed representation […] will be agreed upon with the Commission."

Question 17:

"Users to be able to build their own Web page, assembling information from areas of their interest, to gain an overview of news from relevant services in Europe…www.netvibes.com, www.pageflakes.com, …Relevant services are Web systems with information on thematic areas of Europe Innova Web, information aggregated on the next generation of the Pro INNO Europe Web, the Enterprise Europe Network or relevant resources offered by national or regional innovation organisations in a compatible form."

We understand that the full set of services/sources from which the users will be able to retrieve content for their personal page will be decided in cooperation with the EC during the first phase of the project. Nevertheless, this service might comprise two functionalities. The first will present all sources for the user to select from and use on his/her personal page and the second will present the page itself. Each of the services/sources will provide its own edit/preferences functionalities, for the user to customize its presentation. In order, however, to allow the customized presentation of the content, there must exist some king of interface its retrieval. Are the above mentioned services already providing such interfaces?

Answer to Question 17:

The tender specifications state that "Users may build their own personalised Web page". The functionality of assembling the information sources is illustrated as being "along the lines of what is offered by systems such as www.netvibes.com, www.pageflakes.com and other similar ones." These and other similar systems are publicly accessible and some documentation on them is also publicly available. How the functionality is implemented will depend on what the tenderer finds is the most cost-effective solution.

Question 18:

"the domain europe-innova.eu to be registered till the end of the contract plus 3 months. The current domain to be maintained till the end of 2009 and link to the new one."

Is the domain .eu already reserved by DG-ENTR?

Answer to Question 18:

The domain ".eu" is managed in accordance with the contract or contracts governing the administration of this top-level domain. The European Commission's Enterprise and Industry DG has not reserved the domain ".eu". Neither has it reserved the "Internet domain name "europe-innova" […] in the top-level domain "eu".

Question 19:

"allow for bulk import/export of workgroup members, for creation of email list, etc."

Apart from the functionality for bulk uploading of workgroup members, do you require a dedicated upload option such that email lists are also generated automatically upon the bulk upload?

Answer to Question 19:
The creation of an email list is required. It is neither required nor excluded that this can happen upon the bulk import/export of workgroup members.

Question 20:
"Appropriate Web analytics to inform about:
- number of page views, total and excluding the EC
- share of visits or visitors that come from others than the participants in the initiative
- geographical origin of the visitors, excluding the EC, represented as map
- sections of the service that are read more than others
- level of detail the information threads are followed. Refers in particular to the extent to which background material accompanying news, articles is read."

In order to support the advance statistical information requested, we understand that you plan to provide (or ask the users to provide) the following:
- A specific IPs range that the EC will be using when accessing the portal in order to clearly identify the EC page views
- A specific IP per registered user in order to clearly identify the visitors that are registered members of the initiative.
Practically, each user can visit the portal from any location, from any machine, using dynamically set IPs etc. An alternative would be to force the users to provide some identifier when visiting the portal, however, this would negatively affect the user friendliness.
Please, elaborate more on the above requirement.

Answer to Question 20:
Any proposed solution for the technical implementation of required functionalities, their extent, user friendliness et al., including Web analytics, may come accompanied with conditions to be fulfilled by the European Commission and will, as such, be considered during the evaluation of bids.

Question 21:
"Users cannot be expected to install additional software or have cameras and microphones connected to their computers"
We understand that the use of cameras, microphones or other peripheral devices must not be mandatory for the use of the Portal's and the collaboration workspace's functionalities. However, we also understand that providing optional communication options with the use of cameras for video conferencing, in addition to the other basic communication channels, would not be considered as a drawback.

Answer to Question 21:
Whether a proposed solution to any functional or non-functional requirements would be considered an advantage, neutral or a drawback is the object of the evaluation of each tender and therefore cannot be commented upon.

Question 22:
Which platform is currently used for the collaborative workspace?

Answer to Question 22:
The tender specifications state that "No technical data can be provided in the course of the present tender." on the parts that will be migrated.

Questions 23-26:
What should the storage capacity be for the documents in the private environment of the users?
What should the storage capacity be for the documents in the group environment?
How many different groups are needed?
What is the maximum number of members for each group?

Answer to Questions 23-26:
The extent to which more than "[a] minimum of 300 persons is expected to register in the workspace" will depend on, so far, unpredictable factors such as the content of the projects, their activities, their propensity to use the Web collaboration tools, the nature of the project's output and many more. The number of groups, the maximum number of members per group and the storage capacity per user and per group will also be a function of such factors. Tenderers may include assumptions on such factors.

Question 27:
Should any specific data be imported at the beginning of the project, if so, which data and in which format?

Answer to Question 27:
Yes, "content data will be migrated to the new service contract resulting from this call for tender. No technical data can be provided in the course of the present tender."

Question 28:
Similarly, at the end of the project, should all the data be exported or only some of it, if so, which data and in which format.

Answer to Question 28
All technical provisions pertaining to the hand-over may be made explicit in the tender. The disposition that "The use of open standards and open source software in the implementation of the system is encouraged, in particular when appropriate to ensure interoperability of solutions." also applies to data exchange formats, including at the end of the project.

Question 29:
According to page 35 in the specs: *"Both the public Web portal and the workspace are subject to ongoing adaptations to take account of emerging needs and of Web analytics. Functionality and/or design updates shall therefore be foreseen throughout the contractual period. The Contractor shall therefore allocate at least 20% of the cost for the software of the release that*

puts the full functionality specified in the bid, available for changes over the life-cycle of the software."

Also Answer to Q4 indicates that: *"The 20% referred to in WP 2 as cited above refers to option b) in the question, i.e. the 20% should be calculated on the basis of the overall cost of the system described in the tender specifications."*

From the above we understand the following:

a) The 20% to be reserved refers to the cost of the software release which includes the design and development of the full functionality specified in the bid. That is, costs for horizontal tasks, like support, maintenance, etc, will not be taken into account when calculating the 20%.

b) The above 20% will be utilised for the implementation of adaptations /adjustments /updates of existing functionality. The Contractor is allowed to foresee additional part of the budget for the implementation of emerging needs (collected through the surveys, etc.) that imply also the development of big changes in the functionalities (or even new software services).

Please, let us know whether our understanding given in points a) and b) is correct.

Answer to question 29
The allocation of "at least 20% of the cost for the software of the release that puts the full functionality specified in the bid" refers to the full cost of the information system that will be tendered, encompassing all releases the bidder deems necessary to deploy the full functionality. The words "at least 20%" mean that bidders are free to opt for a higher percentage than 20% in their bid.