

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Subject: Invitation to tender ENER/C3/2014-563 for a contract regarding "Delivering informed investment decisions for energy efficiency investments through accessible data, standardized procedures and benchmarking of performance" also supporting the "Smart Finance for Smart Buildings Initiative"

Ref: contract notice in OJEU 2015/S 111-200638 of 11/06/2015

Last update: 06/08/2015

Question 1:

"We would like to know whether it is possible or not to participate in more than one bid, joining different consortia as partners or subcontractors".

Answer 1:

It is possible for a given legal entity to be a partner or subcontractor in several bids presented by different consortia.

Question 2:

"In line with point 8 of the tender invitation (11 June) to tender ENER/C3/2014-563, we have the following question:

We understand that the budget to be proposed shall include airline tickets and accommodation costs for the 6 EEFIG Board Meetings under work package 3. This could result in up to 240 air tickets and a corresponding or potentially higher number of hotel nights. We note that including these cost items in the evaluation of the financial proposal could result in offers that would include (too) low standard accommodation, inconvenient but cheap flight solutions, and speculate in a low number of meeting participants attending.

May we suggest that the Commission consider making the evaluation of the financial offers based on total fees and excludes the budgeted costs of air fare and hotel for the EEFIG Board Meetings, or alternatively that the Commission request a lump sum covering a minimum number of meeting participants, a minimum daily per diem/hotel rate, a minimum number of hotel nights, a minimum number of air tickets and a minimum rate of air-tickets. This is suggested in order for the Commission to mitigate the risk that the evaluation result will be determined by a logistical cost element. In both cases the Commission could consider the benefit of making these costs a reimbursable/incidental cost item."

Answer 2:

The Commission cannot change the terms of reference as regards the all-inclusive bids.

However, to ease the development of bids and ensure fair treatment of bids during the evaluation, the Commission can indicate a maximum amount for all 6 EEFIG Sounding Board meetings (travel and accommodation) expenses at the level of up to 200.000 EUR (40 participants x 6 meetings x 800 EUR/pers).

The tenderers are informed that the cost composition of the financial offer as regards travel and accommodation expenses has to be based on realistic assumptions, and has to be balanced compared to other budgeted items related to the delivery of expected services.

Question 3:

"Regarding work-package 4: What is meant by 'web-based' tool? Does a downloadable excel-model suffice this criterion?"

Answer 3:

As explained in the Terms of Reference:

"modelling tool will be based on a plug-in technology allowing for joining it with another web-based portals or tools. Financial institutions, and in particular their financial product developers, should be able to make their own "model runs", free of charge, with the support of the tenderer.

Tenderers are invited to propose the methodology, technology and interface architecture meeting the required characteristics."

The tenderers are invited to reflect on the requirements as set in the Terms of Reference and propose the most suitable platform/technology for the modelling tool.

Question 4:

Could you please confirm if Energy Efficiency Financial Institution Group (EEFIG) members will be able to participate in bids either as lead contractor or subcontractors?

Answer 4:

The participation in this tender procedure is open on equal terms to all natural and legal persons coming within the scope of the treaties and to all natural and legal persons in a third country which has a special agreement with the Union in the field of public procurement. In that context, EEFIG members are able to participate in bids. However, in order to avoid possible conflicts of interest, EEFIG members directly involved in the selected bid will not be able to participate in the EEFIG sounding board.

Question 5:

On WP1: Do the projects under the EU facilities, which should be incorporated in the database, provide all the inputs specified under WP1? If not, can the EC provide example formats per facility, so the contractor can take account of missing inputs when describing the approach for WP1 and WP2?

Answer 5:

The Commission will facilitate access to data triggered by the EU's project development assistance facilities. However, it cannot guarantee that data will be available for all the examples of indicators specified in WP1, for all projects. The application forms from the facilities (e.g. http://www.eib.org/attachments/documents/elena_application_form_en.pdf), their guide for proposers (e.g. http://ec.europa.eu/energy/intelligent/files/call_for_proposals/call2013-cip-iee-promo-pda-guide-for-proposers.pdf) or their factsheets (e.g. <http://www.eib.org/products/advising/elena/index.htm>) can provide some indications of the different data monitored by these facilities. For your reminder, the tenderers are invited to propose their own methodology for data structure, while respecting the major elements of the database: anonymised datasets, segmentation and basic project characteristics/data as described in the ToR (WP1).

Question 6:

On WP3: The EEFIG will be a Sounding Board for all WPs, will actively participate in the work and will check the results provided by the contractor. But the contractor has a formal relation with the EC. Can the EC explain the relation between contractor, EEFIG and EC itself in case there is a diversion between formal requirements and requirements of EEFIG?

Answer 6:

As explained in the Terms of Reference, the EEFIG Sounding Board's ultimate task will be to ensure the "reality check" of the work undertaken under this tender. Inputs provided by the EEFIG Sounding Board will have to be taken into account as appropriate, in the limit of the contractual requirements defined in the tender specifications.

Question 7:

For the Sounding Board, should all previous members of the EEFIG be included? Should proposals for additional expertise therefore seek only to supplement existing EEFIG members or should the tenderer anticipate eliminating some existing members and therefore proposing new potential members in their place?

Answer 7:

The current EEFIG members list is a starting point to compose the ad hoc EEFIG Sounding Board member list. As described in the terms of reference, the EEFIG Sounding Board composition will need to reflect the specific tasks under this Tender. Therefore, the EEFIG Sounding Board will primarily target the experts/representatives with a strong relevance for energy efficiency investing. The terms of reference subsequently define a core list of topics to be covered. Tenderers are requested to propose a methodology for acquisition of further expertise that eventually cannot already be found in the current EEFIG member list and to provide the proposed additional contact list as part of the Tender.

Question 8:

For travel for Sounding Board members to attend meetings, how is it anticipated that payment from the tenderer to participants will be made? Would the tenderer reimburse participants based on invoices? Or rather be responsible for directly booking their travel arrangements?

Answer 8:

The modalities for reimbursement of participants are left at the best convenience of the tenderers.

Question 9:

Regarding WP4, what technologies does the Commission wish the contractor to use for web development (e.g. Java, VB.NET or others)? Where should the web tool be located and who would be responsible for web operations (e.g. hosted on EC servers, in the cloud, by the contractor)?

Answer 9:

As indicated in Answer 3, tenderers are invited to reflect on the requirements as set in the Terms of Reference and propose the most suitable platform/technology for the modelling tool.

According to the terms of reference, tenderers should ensure the continuation of the web-based modelling tool, in particular that the tool can easily be taken over for further development if needed. Therefore, even if hosted elsewhere for the duration of the contract or later on, it is recommended that the web development follows the Commission Internet Providers Guide, available at: http://ec.europa.eu/ipg/index_en.htm

Question 10:

Many consider water an "energy" resource. Does the scope of this project include water usage, or we should stick to the ones that fall under the "traditional" terms of energy resources?

Answer 10:

The terms of reference make clear that the study is focused on energy efficiency. The "traditional" terms of energy resources should be used.

Question 11:

Is there a limit (minimum or maximum) for the value of the projects which may be incorporated into the database?

Answer 11:

There is no such limit.

Question 12:

What is the geographical scope of the benchmarking? Does it only cover the EU-28 or project data from other countries (e.g. the USA) may also be included in the database?

Answer 12:

The study and the project database is focused on the EU-28. As required by the terms of reference for WP1, other sources and projects, possibly outside of Europe, should be researched and a methodology proposed for inclusion of applicable results, as appropriate.

Question 13:

What is the requirement regarding the representativeness of the projects? Which dimensions (regional, industry sectors, project sizes, etc.) are the top priorities regarding representativeness?

Answer 13:

The tenderers have to propose their own methodology to adequately collect and interpret results.

Question 14:

Is the deployment of RES-related systems (installation of PV panels, wind turbines, etc.) relevant regarding the scope investments?

Answer 14:

Such systems are relevant in so far they directly contribute to the energy efficiency of the observed asset.

Question 15:

Should the scope of energy efficiency improving measures include both building operation related (e.g.: space heating, cooling, lighting, building envelope) and technology related (production equipment such as compressor, machinery, automation systems) energy-user systems? If yes, to what extent should we examine the technological energy-using systems or appliances?

Answer 15:

Both aspects will need to be covered. The tender specifications give example of indicators that will have to be considered to describe the project characteristics, amongst which technical characteristics. Tenderers are invited to expand this list as part of their methodology, having in mind that the list will need to be discussed and improved during the project.