



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR ENERGY

Directorate C - Renewables, Research and Innovation, Energy Efficiency
C.2 - New energy technologies, innovation and clean coal

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

INVITATION TO TENDER NO. ENER/C2/2016-502

EIP SCC MARKET PLACE

CONTRACT NOTICE: OJ 2016/S 063-107762

Last update: 11/05/2016

Question 1: As this is a service contract, it is important that tenderers know precisely how many events they will be responsible for in the course of the 36 months, in order to estimate costs accurately. Please confirm the maximum number of Action Cluster meetings, collaborative workshops and side events per year that the contractor will be expected to organise.

Answer: The number of events is stated in the [Tender Specifications](#) on page 12. In fact the minimum requirements are specified. A maximum number of events can't be given according to the fast moving and changing context the EIP SCC Market Place is operating in.

Question 2: Please specify the locations of the General Assemblies, Action Cluster meetings, collaborative workshops and side events.

Answer: The General Assemblies' venues will be defined approx. 6 months before, taking inter alia into consideration the political settings (the next General Assembly on 24 May in Eindhoven is a Dutch Presidency event, for example). As specified in the [Tender Specifications](#) on page 12 one of the Action Cluster meetings may be organised within the frame of the General Assembly.

Otherwise and in general terms the locations of these meetings will be discussed and defined in collaboration with the European Commission services involved in the Smart Cities and Communities EIP.

Question 3: Please confirm the duration of the General Assemblies, Action Cluster meetings, collaborative workshops and side events, as this will have a direct impact on venue hire and catering costs.

Answer: The General Assemblies organised to date took between one and two days (plus on-site preparation time determined by the service provider).

All other meetings had durations between a half and a full day. This shall serve as an approximate average duration and does not constitute a statement of a fixed duration from the European Commission's side.

The European Commission expects tenderers to foresee reasonable overheads to cope with unforeseen changes in an event's program or duration.

Question 4: The travel and accommodation costs for VIPs, speakers and participants are not mentioned. Please confirm that the contractor will not be responsible for these costs, nor for reimbursing these costs to the participants.

Answer: Please refer to Section 1.6 of the Tender Specifications – Part E, Financial Offer: *"The quoted price must be a fixed amount which includes all charges (including travel and subsistence). Travel and subsistence expenses are not refundable separately."*

This means, unless explicitly stated otherwise in the Tender Specifications for a particular type of cost, that the tenderers must include in their budgets (financial offers) all costs required to carry out the tasks.

As for this particular type of cost, it is pointed out on page 14 of the [Tender Specifications](#) the tenderer has to cover *"Secretarial support to the Action Cluster and initiative lead persons, including management of the reimbursement of travel costs up to a ceiling of € 500,00 for up to 30 such members for up to four meetings per year (the budget allocation for this shall be presented in the proposal)"*.

Question 5: Please confirm that all conferences, workshops and meetings will be conducted in English only.

Answer: We confirm that all conferences, workshops and meetings will be held in English. The language skills and quality levels we refer to are for the English language.

Question 6: As this is a service contract, it is important that tenderers are able to estimate accurately the volume of written content that they will be required to produce in the course of the 36 months, in order to calculate the corresponding costs. Please confirm the number of information leaflets, brochures, reports, newsletters and other relevant documents that the contractor will be required to produce. Please also indicate the format and length of each of these products (e.g. 28 pages A4).

Answer: The tenderer is according to the Tender Specifications asked to provide minutes of each meeting. Since the number and contents of each meeting will vary it is impossible to determine the average length and/or scope of any of these documents. In general terms these documents should not be too long, straight to the point and purposeful while following the quality criteria set out in the Tender Specifications.

Potential tenderers are invited to have a look on the web site of the EIP SCC Market Place (<http://eu-smartcities.eu>) to get an idea of the length and scope of papers produced by the current Market Place team.

The monthly newsletter is also available there to get an idea of its length and content.

Question 7: Will printing be done by OPOCE, or should tenderers budget for the costs of printing 3.000 copies of each information product?

Answer: Printing will be done by the tenderer. For information products such as brochures professional design and printing is expected. For other documents such as meeting minutes, a lower quality (laser prints) will be acceptable.

In any case the respective quality levels must be agreed and clarified with the European Commission to avoid double work and unwanted results.

For the inclusion of costs into the financial offers, please refer to question 4 above: the budget of the tenderers must be sufficient to enable to carry out all tasks with the expected quality.

Question 8: Please clarify whether the contractor will also be responsible for the creation of original content for the EIP SCC Market Place's web site. If so, please specify the type, length and frequency of publication of this content.

Answer: The approach of the tenderers to all tasks should be rather proactive, proposing approaches and solutions on their own part.

The tenderers must propose, in their technical offers, their approach to the tasks related to the web site, e.g. the communication to the stakeholders, the information to be presented on the web site, the manner of presentation of the information, etc., in order to better achieve the purposes of the tender.

For this particular task, the selected tenderer will be responsible for the contents on the EIP SCC Market Place's web site. It is – however – not

possible to specify the exact type, length and frequency of these publications since the context, in which the EIP SCC Market Place operates is often asking for updates and additional publications (such as news items, calendar updates, etc.). The tenderer should be able to demonstrate the flexibility needed.

Potential tenderers are invited to have a look on the web site of the EIP SCC Market Place (<http://eu-smartcities.eu>) to get an idea of the type, length and frequency of publications.

Question 9: The description of Work Package 1 tasks calls for "*high quality web streaming, teleconferencing, video conferencing, wireless microphones, high class audio, etc.*". Please clarify the specifications of the teleconferencing, video conferencing and high class audio – in what situations will these services be used, by whom, and for how long at each event?

Answer: Teleconferencing/video conferencing: these services are foreseen to facilitate meetings with participants across Europe in cases, where face-to-face meetings or the physical participation of key participants is not possible.

High class audio: it is expected that the successful tenderer provides state-of-the-art audio services during events, in which these services are needed, thus typically in the frame of bigger events such as the General Assemblies.

The services are to be provided for the duration of the respective meetings and events.

Question 10: The description of WP1 tasks on page 12 of the [Tender Specifications](#) states that "*the meeting venues shall provide*" a plenary room, 6 break-out rooms and technical services. Does this specification apply only to the General Assembly, or to the General Assembly and the Action Cluster meetings, or to the General Assembly, or the Action Cluster meetings and the collaborative workshops?

Answer: This setting typically applies to the General Assemblies and Action Cluster meetings since there we typically need to facilitate a plenary setting plus breakout sessions for the Action Clusters and the roll-out initiatives thereunder.

Depending on the number of participants/the size of the collaborative workshops the same setting may also apply to the latter. Depending on the actual number of participants and the program of those meetings a lower number of breakout rooms may nevertheless be expected.

Question 11: The bullet-point concerning the collaborative workshops refers to "section 3.2.2". We cannot find this section in the [Tender Specifications](#). Please clarify.

Answer: This is a clerical error, in fact. The respective section is section 2.2.2 of the [Tender Specifications](#).

Question 12: To allow tenderers to calculate prices accurately, please specify the maximum number of participants to be allowed for at the two collaborative workshops and the four side events.

Answer: Since the member base of the EIP SCC's market place is constantly growing and since the setting of each event is highly individual it is impossible to specify a clear maximum number.

Based on the previous events it is nevertheless estimated that for each individual meeting the number of participants shall not exceed 200 people.

Question 13: On pages 10 and 11 of the [Tender Specifications](#) the following statements can be found:

"While the EIP SCC Market Place shall in general be open to everyone the potential categories of stakeholders which can be admitted to any of the above mentioned groups may include, but are not limited to, the following categories:

[...]

- *Associations, Networks, Alliances, NGOs such as Eurocities, Covenant of Mayors, Local Governments for Sustainability (ICLEI), European Regions Research and Innovation Network (ERRIN), European Network on Living Labs (EnoLL) to name some;*

[...]

Following the above it is crucial that the selected tenderer is neutral, impartial and transparent vis-à-vis the various stakeholders."

Is any of the mentioned networks, which are mentioned as potential stakeholders considered as "not neutral" and thus excluded from the tender?

Answer: The pre-requisite of being neutral, impartial and transparent vis-à-vis the various stakeholders must be fulfilled by all potential tenderers, independent of their nature.

According to article 148 (8) of the Regulation implementing the Financial Regulation *"the Contracting authorities may conclude that economic operators will not perform the contract to an appropriate quality standard where the contracting authority establishes that they have conflicting interests which may negatively affect the performance of the contract"*.

This means that the tenderers must declare, in their tenders, all potential situations of conflict of interest that might potentially have an impact on the implementation of some or all of the tasks (if any), e.g. an involvement in a stakeholder group. In the case of potential conflict of interest, the tenderers must also provide for the measures in order to avoid the conflict of interest to actually occur, e.g. segregation of duties and/or teams, independent quality control, etc.. It is up to the Commission to decide whether the tender is eligible, taking into account the gravity of the risk of conflict of interest and the measures proposed.

Question 14: In the [Tender Specifications](#) it is mentioned various times that *"the selected tenderer is expected to locate all personnel in Brussels to ensure closest and easiest collaboration"*.

Would tenderers be able to fulfil the requirements of closest collaboration in case that only "some" or the "main" personnel is at the European Commission's disposal in Brussels?

Answer: It is essential, taking into account the nature of the tasks that the successful tenderer can convincingly guarantee that requests of the Commission concerning the provided service are answered efficiently and effectively in a time frame. This means that the tenderer must be able to locate at least the core team in Brussels. The presentation of the team must include the location of the team members so that the Commission can decide whether the number of team members located to Brussels is sufficient to cope with the tasks with the expected quality.

Question 15: In section 2.4 of the [Tender Specifications](#), under Payments, it is mentioned that the first interim payment is done after reception and approval of the Interim Technical report, which is to be sent after 18 months.

Does this also hold for the costs for the events or can they be reimbursed when costs are made/right after the events?

Answer: Payments are in general made upon approval of the respective reports as mentioned in the [Tender Specifications](#). No other payments are foreseen.

This approach is coherent with the condition, that the tenderers would provide their financial offers as lump sum offers which cover all costs. No expenses are to be refunded separately.

Question 16: In the [Tender Specifications](#) on page 15 it is stated that *"the selected tenderer will maintain and further improve the web site of the EIP SCC Market Place"*.

Question 16a: Does maintaining the web site include hosting services, or is hosting outside the tender's scope?

Answer: Yes, the web site hosting costs shall be included in the tender proposal.

As indicated above *"the quoted price must be a fixed amount which includes all charges [...]"* (according to Section 1.6 of the [Tender Specifications](#) – Part E, Financial Offer, see also question 4). Thus, all costs falling in the scope of the contract – including the web site's operation and maintenance – shall be covered by the tenderer.

Question 16b: If hosting is necessary, can you please provide information on sizing (current hosting infrastructure, size of web site, number of documents, etc.).

Answer: The current setup is as follows:

- Virtual server in a private network, operation system is a CentOS 6 and Centminmod, working on NGINX; it has 16GB RAM and 8 vCores at 2.8GHz and uses SSD drives.
- Incremental security backups are made daily and weekly.
- The web site is currently 5.5GB large (= web site plus work area), it currently consists of 2848 pages, its user database contains 5180 users, out of which 4733 are active.
- A SSL certificate is in place.
- The current magnitude of costs for running the web site is approx. €450/month including server, the SSL certificate, Solr and NGINX. This includes the personnel costs for monitoring systems, update and control (24h/7days a week).

Question 16c: Are additional costs for running the web site, such as acquiring SSL certificates, included in the project's scope?

Answer: One of the objectives of the contract is the continuous maintenance and improvement of the website as a whole, and not only some of its aspects or components. Please refer, e.g. to Section 2.1.2 of the [Tender Specifications](#), 10th bullet point.

All costs necessary for running the web site shall be included in the tender proposal.

As indicated above *"the quoted price must be a fixed amount which includes all charges [...]"* (according to Section 1.6 of the [Tender Specifications](#) – Part E, Financial Offer, see also question 4). Thus, all costs falling in the scope of the contract – including the web site's operation and maintenance – shall be covered by the tenderer.

Question 16d: Is maintaining the web site limited to providing security updates and minor patches, but does not include major Drupal updates?

Answer: Maintaining the web site shall include all activities necessary for a reliable operation and a state-of-the-art user experience. This also includes major Drupal updates should this be necessary to achieve this.

Question 16e: If the current hosting arrangement is with a commercial hosting provider, can it be extended?

Answer: At the current stage we have the confirmation that the arrangement can be extended and adapted to new needs.

Question 16f: Will the necessary contact information of the hosting provider be therefore provided to the successful tenderer?

Answer: Yes, upon signature of the contract and during handover of the web site. Please refer to Tender Specifications, WP 5.

Question 16g: Is it possible to create a test-login for the protected area of the Smart Cities Market Place or provide additional detail on the rights and roles of registered members?

Answer: It is not foreseen to reveal these details during the tender procedure, also for reasons of privacy and data protection. Moreover, it is up to the tenderers to come up with a full solution on their own part as regards of all tasks, bearing in mind the objectives of the call for tenders (Section 2.1.2 of the Tender Specifications).

However, the information mentioned in your question will be part of the handover procedure upon signature of the contract.

Question 16h: Will an update from Drupal version 7 to Drupal version 8 or beyond be outside the project's scope?

Answer: Please refer to the answers 16c, 16d and 16g above. The tenderers should come forward with their own vision and solution as regards of all tasks, including the web site maintenance and improvement. An update referred to in your question is in no case out of the scope of the contract – the tenderers should propose the approach to the maintenance and improvement of the web site that they see as the most relevant.

Question 17: In the [Tender Specifications](#) on page 16 "*Measures, which will increase the accessibility of relevant information, also for non-members of the EIP-SCC Market Place (e.g. a fully integrated full text search)*" are mentioned.

Question 17a: Does this requirement aim at improving the general accessibility of content (readability, attractive presentation,

suitable information architecture), rather than at specific aspects of online accessibility, e.g. according to Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0?

In other words, is the current level of online accessibility sufficient and should be maintained, but not improved in the future?

Answer: As already mentioned in answers 16c and 16d, maintaining the web site shall include all activities necessary for a reliable operation and a state-of-the-art user experience including also means of improving the accessibility of the web site.

Question 17b: On what technology is the search on the web site currently based (Drupal default, Solr, etc.)?

Answer: For searches Solr is currently being used.

Question 18: In the [Tender Specifications](#) on page 16 "*a fully integrated collaborative workspace, to enable seamless online collaboration among stakeholders (e.g. groups of up to 100 stakeholders editing documents at the same time)*" is mentioned.

Question 18a: Does "*seamless online collaboration*" refer to tools such as Google Apps or Wikis?

Answer: In fact we refer to tools such as Google Apps and the alike.

Question 18b: Should collaborative editing occur in real-time (Google Apps) or non-real-time (Wikis)?

Answer: In real-time.

Question 18c: Are possible additional costs for tools such as Google Apps to be borne by the selected tenderer or are they outside the tender's scope?

Answer: As indicated above "*the quoted price must be a fixed amount which includes all charges [...]*" (according to Section 1.6 of the [Tender Specifications](#) – Part E, Financial Offer, see also question 4). Thus, all costs falling in the scope of the contract – including the web site's operation and maintenance – shall be covered by the tenderer.

Accordingly, in their technical offers the tenderers must provide their approach to the web site maintenance and improvement that covers all actions that they consider necessary in the light of the objectives of the contract (Section 2.1.2 of the Tender Specifications).

Question 18d: Is there an indication of how many stakeholder collaboration groups of up to 100 users each will be necessary during the project to allow for an accurate estimate of licensing cost?

Answer: Currently there are about 40 groups with approx. 700 users.

Question 19: In the [Tender Specifications](#) on page 17 "*maintenance and further development of [a] web-based interactive guidance tool for financing instruments, taking into account the specific needs of the self-declared user category (City topology, SME, industry, etc. ...)*" is mentioned.

Question 19a: Can you please provide a link to the web-based interactive guidance tool for financing instruments?

Answer: The mentioned tool is currently being developed by the market place team and shall be available before the General Assembly of the EIP SCC on 24 May in Eindhoven. Please check the sub site of the Action Cluster on Business Models, Finance and Procurement at the following URL for potential updates:

<https://eu-smartcities.eu/content/business-models-finance-and-procurement>

Question 19b: Is additional technical information on the tool available, such as technology stack used (e.g. PHP, JAVA, .NET), a technical specification document, a functional prototype, or similar?

Answer: The tool is being programmed using PHP on the already mentioned Drupal platform.

Question 20: In chapter 2.7 of the [Tender Specifications](#) it is stated that "*the amount of work involved to carry out this contract is estimated at 3.000 man days.*"

Does this mean that

a) the total budget of the project consists of personnel-cost for an estimated, actually worked 3.000 man days plus non-personnel cost (e.g. travel cost/subsistence project team, catering for events/workshops/meetings, room rent for events/workshops/meetings, reimbursement of travel cost for participants in Action Cluster Meetings etc.),

or

b) "*3.000 man days*" is meant to be a placeholder for the total project budget, i.e. personnel-cost and non-personnel-cost, which would mean – as the project tasks involve a significant share of non-personnel cost – that the actual man days spent on the project by the project team would be significantly lower than 3.000 man days?

Answer: The specified 3.000 man days are an estimation of the actual work of the tenderer's team involved in the contract; they do not represent any cost estimation.

They shall help tenderers to plan their personnel allocations accordingly, while staying inside the given boundaries of the maximum budget of € 2.700.000.

Therefore, it is not mandatory for the tenderers to precisely foresee the work in the extents 3000 man-days, as long as they address all tasks with the required quality and will not exceed the maximum budget.

Question 21: The invitation to tender states the submission deadline of the tender as shown in the table below:

The tender must be received no later than 20/05/2016. You must use one of the following means of submission:

<i>Means of submission</i>	<i>Time limit</i>	<i>Evidence of dispatch</i>	<i>Address for delivery</i>
<i>Post</i>	24:00 CET	<i>Postmark</i>	<i>CALL FOR TENDERS ENER/C2/2016-502 - EIP SCC Market Place European Commission Directorate-General for Energy Unit C2, DM24 03/118 For the attention of Mr Georg Houben B-1049 Brussels Belgium</i>
<i>Courier</i>	24:00 CET	<i>Deposit slip of courier service</i>	<i>CALL FOR TENDERS ENER/C2/2016-502 - EIP SCC Market Place European Commission Directorate-General for Energy Unit C2, DM24 03/118 For the attention of Mr Georg Houben Avenue du Bourget 1 B-1140 Brussels (Evere) Belgium</i>
<i>In person (hand delivery)</i>	17:00 CET	<i>Proof of receipt, signed and dated by the official in the central mail department who takes delivery</i>	<i>Directorate-General for Energy Unit C2, DM24 03/118 For the attention of Mr Georg Houben Avenue du Bourget 1 B-1140 Brussels (Evere) Belgium</i>

Is "Receipt" to be understood as the point of time at which the tenderer hands over the tender to the post office or courier service or central mail department?

Answer: It is to be understood as the point of time of delivery respecting the mentioned time limits.

Question 22: Support to AC & Initiative Leads: in the second bullet of Section 2.1. (page 8 in the [Tender Specifications](#)), the text refers to support to the "...(*voluntary*) lead persons...".

Is the reference here intended to emphasise the need to limit the amount of work these parties need to do (respecting their pro-bono contribution), OR to stipulate that their role must be voluntary.

Answer: It refers to the first assumption, that – since their contribution is pro-bono – their work shall be facilitated as much as possible.

Question 23: Event Sponsorship: Within section 2.2.2 at page 11 in the [Tender Specifications](#), paragraphs 3 & 4 states:

"Activities of the EIP SCC may be co-funded by public authorities or NGO's provided all independence on the content and organisation of the activity is guaranteed."

"In order to ensure the impartiality and independence of the EIP SCC's market place any sponsoring or other types of support for the market place's activities (e.g. events) by industry or private businesses are subject to the prior approval of the European Commission."

Question 23a: Is there any further guidance as to what is considered appropriate?

Answer: No. Sponsorship is – in general terms – considered as an exception and should not be proposed in the offer as an option to finance events or other activities of the EIP SCC Market Place.

The aim is that the EIP SCC Market Place and its management stays impartial and independent, without any implication of a conflict of interest, as referred to in the answer to question 13 and on page 11 of the [Tender Specifications](#).

Question 23b: If not, and sponsorship options wish to be tabled, within the spirit of this clause, how do you propose the bidder accounts for this from a budget standpoint (recognising that at this bidding stage the conditions have yet to be reviewed by the Commission)?

Answer: Considering answer 23a it is possible to provide information on sponsoring, but this information will not be considered for the evaluation of the overall budget and resources allocation.

Question 24: Website: Within Section 2.2.2 on page 11 of the [Tender Specifications](#), the second paragraph states: *"The EIP SCC Market Place shall be maintained and improved on state of the art ICT technology (and beyond)."*

Question 24a: Does the current contract include a clause for handover, similar to the current call?

Answer: Yes. Please refer to WP 5 in the Tender Specifications, as well as to article I.8 of the service contract on the acquisition of the intellectual property rights regarding the deliverables by the Commission.

Question 24b: If so, is any information available on the overall architecture, data structures, priority fixes and intended development roadmap?

Answer: Please refer to question 16 for general technical details. There is – however – no general roadmap for development of the EIP SCC Market Place. The tenderers are nevertheless expected to come forward with concrete suggestions to improve the site and its users' experiences (initially and then as well continuously and proactively throughout the contract). Please also refer to the answers 16h and 18c above.

Question 25: Registered Users: On page 18 of the [Tender Specifications](#), the number of site visits is provided for the period from February 2015 to February 2016.

Could usage rates be made available as well as the number of registered users at key points of the current contract period?

Answer: This will be a part of the information to be delivered in the course of handover upon contract signature. The current number of registered users – however – is available on the top right corner of the EIP SCC Market Place web site at <http://eu-smartcities.eu>.

In terms of user base evolution the General Assemblies and Action Cluster meetings may be considered as focal points for an increased user registration since in the proximity of these events dedicated communication efforts are undertaken.

Question 26: Website hosting: Does the current Smart Cities Market Place web site have a stage/test environment, where new modules can be tested by Commission staff? Or does testing of new modules take place in the development (dev) environment only?

Answer: During the current contract period the Commission staff involved got access to new modules and content via the development (dev) environment.