

## QUESTIONS AND RESPONSES

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### RFP – IMPROVING OPERATIONS OF THE NATIONAL CONTROL CENTER – RWANDA

**QUESTION:** Would it be possible to request an extension to the submission date by 2 weeks, from September 4<sup>th</sup>, 2020 to September 18<sup>th</sup>, 2020?

**ANSWER:** Unfortunately, we cannot grant you this request. We have certain timing obligations and unless we receive fewer than 3 proposals in response to this RFP, the closing date will not be extended.

**QUESTION:** Does the National Control Centre control Power Plants (Thermal, Hydro & Solar) Operations also/Or Is it mainly controlling Grid & Electrical system Operation?

**ANSWER:** The National Control Center does NOT control power plants, it only controls operations of the grid.

**QUESTION:** What would be the basic qualification levels of Operators/Supervisors?

**ANSWER:** National Control Center operators are technicians, and supervisors are engineers.

**QUESTION:** Scope for Training facilities arrangement? (More clarity is required on this requirement).

**ANSWER:** We expect the Consultant to find and make arrangements with an appropriate facility for the training. That means that the facility must be equipped with adequate equipment for the training, including operator training simulator. It also means that it will be the Consultant's responsibility to deal with the facility's owner (if the facility is not owned by the Consultant), sign the lease agreement, make lease payments, etc. We will bear the costs of leasing that facility for the two trainings (by reimbursing the Consultant).

**QUESTION:** We need more clarifications about DUNS number and SAM registration.

**ANSWER:** All our consultants must maintain current SAM (System of Award Management, sam.gov) registration with the U.S. Government. They also must have a DUNS number (<https://www.dnb.com/duns-number.html>), as it is impossible to obtain SAM registration without it. We require our consultants to provide both with the application.

**QUESTION:** We are having a challenge with our SAM registration as there was an error in our D-U-N-S record for our number. We made corrections but the records are not being updated in time and we may go beyond the deadline for submission. Is there a way you can assist us in this regard?

**ANSWER:** We will accept a proposal if it includes proof that the company is in the process of obtaining a DUNS number and SAM registration. A PDF copy of an email from "notification@sam.gov" to the bidder stating that the bidder "successfully submitted the entity registration for NAME OF COMPANY in the U.S. Government's System for Award Management (SAM)" will be considered an acceptable proof.

Please keep in mind that we cannot sign a contract with a consultant who does not have current SAM registration. Therefore, if you cannot provide proof of current SAM registration by the time we complete evaluations of the submitted proposals, your proposal will be rejected.

**QUESTION:** As per clause V. a) “Data Universal Numbering System (D-U-N-S) number and proof of a current registration in the System of Award Management (SAM), is mandatory for Consideration of the proposal”. We have obtained DUNS number and SAM registration is in process. It is requested to clarify whether proof of application for SAM registration can be considered for submission of proposal.

**ANSWER:** We will accept a proposal **if it includes proof** that the company is **in the process** of obtaining a DUNS number and SAM registration. A PDF copy of an email from “notification@sam.gov” to the bidder stating that the bidder “successfully submitted the entity registration for NAME OF COMPANY in the U.S. Government’s System for Award Management (SAM)” will be considered an acceptable proof.

**QUESTION:** Part of training through online platforms can be considered or only classroom training is allowed?

**ANSWER:** We do not believe that any part of this training can be done remotely, therefore the full scope of the training must be done in person.

**QUESTION:** Participants qualifications (diplomas)

**ANSWER:** Operators are technicians, supervisors are engineers (college degree).

**QUESTION:** Participants average age

**ANSWER:** Between mid-twenties to mid-thirties.

**QUESTION:** Participants' experience average duration

**ANSWER:** 2-5 years.

**QUESTION:** Equipment used in control rooms (Siemens, ABB, ...)

**ANSWER:** PSI SCADA/EMS.

**QUESTION:** Participants mastery level of SCADA

**ANSWER:** Varied.

**QUESTION:** The energy production plants kind (thermal, hydraulic)

**ANSWER:** Hydro, thermal, solar.

**QUESTION:** Renewable energies deployed in the network (PV, wind turbine)

**ANSWER:** Hydro, solar, methane.

**QUESTION:** Renewable energies integration level

**ANSWER:** Hydro is 45%, solar is 6%.

**QUESTION:** Is a requirement for a Consultant to be a member of the USEA in order to participate in this procurement?

**ANSWER:** No, a Consultant does NOT need to be a member of USEA to participate in this procurement. Furthermore, USEA members' proposals do not receive any special considerations.

**QUESTION:** Regarding the financial proposal, please could you advise whether you require a cost-plus proposal, a fixed-firm proposal, or a different structure for our financial offer?

**ANSWER:** We prefer a fixed-price proposal.

**QUESTION:** With regards to off-site training, is the expectation to have that training abroad i.e. out of Africa or it can be done in Africa where facilities are available.

**ANSWER:** The training can be done in Africa as long the training site is safe and the training facilities are adequate, as specified in the RFP. Unfortunately, there are no such facilities in Rwanda and that is why the training has to be conducted outside of the country.

**QUESTION:** On certification, there are no entities that certify for other entities as far as I know e.g. NERC can certify operators in the USA or Eskom can certify operators in South Africa, but I don't think they can certify for operations in Rwanda. However, the trainer could give NERC or Eskom type training and issue its own certification to trained staff. Could this be acceptable?

**ANSWER:** We are well aware how difficult it is to obtain internationally recognized certification. That is why it is preferred but not required. A training company's certification will be perfectly acceptable.

**QUESTION:** Is there a specific format for proposals you would prefer to see?

**ANSWER:** No, there is no specific format, as long as the proposal includes all the requested documents.

**QUESTION:** What is the typical organization or company that responds to this type of RFP?

**ANSWER:** It depends on a project. For this RFP, we expect to receive proposals from engineering and consulting companies, business consulting companies, electric utilities, and power system operators.

**QUESTION:** What are the typical budgetary expectations for one of these RFPs?

**ANSWER:** It varies greatly, depending on a project. For example, three of our RFPs published last year had award ceilings of \$60,000, \$75,000, and \$150,000. We cannot disclose our expectations for this particular RFP.

**QUESTION:** Has this RFP been issued after the submission of EOI by interested parties? If yes, kindly share the list of shortlisted firms to approach for joint participation against the RFP.

**ANSWER:** There were no EOI submissions and there is no list of shortlisted companies.

**QUESTION:** If this RFP has been issued for open participation do firms can form consortium to participate as single entry?

**ANSWER:** Companies are allowed to form consortiums.

**QUESTION:** Please provide the indicative budget as the RFP states to submit financials along with the proposal.

**ANSWER:** There is no budget template. Please specify all the expenses that you intend to include in the Financial Proposal, i.e. labor costs for principle and supporting personnel, costs of developing and producing training curricula and supporting documents (manuals, presentations), etc.

**QUESTION:** Also whether the mentioned training program for NCC officials in two batches has to be organized in Rwanda or they can also be arranged in country of service provider?

**ANSWER:** As the RFP states, we are expecting the Consultant to provide “an appropriate training facility outside of Rwanda as there are no such facilities in the country.”

**QUESTION:** Is lack of production the only cause for load shedding? Or are there causes like technical problems etc...?

**ANSWER:** Unlike in some other countries in Eastern Africa, load shedding is not an issue in Rwanda. Rwanda's current capacity is quite sufficient to meet all industrial and household demand, and there has not been load shedding since early 2015.

**QUESTION:** RFP submission [needs French translation with English]?

**ANSWER:** The proposal package must be in English. No French translation is required.

**QUESTION:** Facilitation of Work (French or English or Bilingual)?

**ANSWER:** All activities and trainings will be conducted in English. All deliverables must be in English, no French translation will be required.

**QUESTION:** Please clarify whether all correspondences, reports, discussions, Training lectures, etc. will be in English? If no, then do we have to incorporate cost of translator for all modes of communications & report preparation in our financial proposal?

**ANSWER:** All activities and trainings will be conducted in English. All deliverables must be in English. We will **NOT** bear any costs associated with translating any materials from the Consultant's native language into English.

**QUESTION:** Since part of the tasks and objectives of the RFP is to conduct a comprehensive audit of their operations and procedures, is it possible to discuss how this material be shared? Are the materials we will review in digital format, hardcopy or a mix of both?

**ANSWER:** The utility materials will be made available mostly in digital format, but there might be some that will only be available as hard copies.

**QUESTION:** Do they currently have a training program? If so, is there data / information available on their training program that can be shared or discussed?

**ANSWER:** To the best of our knowledge, the utility does not currently have a training program for their control room operators.

**QUESTION:** Is there a specific format for the Technical Proposal?

**ANSWER:** There is no specific format for the Technical Proposal.

**QUESTION:** Is there a specific format for the Financial Proposal?

**ANSWER:** There is no specific format for the Financial Proposal.

**QUESTION:** Do we need to submit Man-days and rate thereof for each activity?

**ANSWER:** Yes, please.

**QUESTION:** What exactly are the Line items and what can be covered under the Financial Proposal?

**ANSWER:** Please specify all the expenses that you intend to include in the Financial Proposal, i.e. labor costs for principle and supporting personnel, costs of developing and producing training curricula and supporting documents (manuals, presentations, etc.).

**QUESTION:** As per the RfP, the Consultant has to sign a subcontract with USEA, but services would be provided to the Rwanda Energy Group/ EUCL. Will any payments to the Consultants be subject to local taxation laws of Rwanda for this sub-contract?

**ANSWER:** No.

**QUESTION:** Will this subcontract be subject to an audit by a Rwandan authority or by any U.S. authority or by both?

**ANSWER:** The subcontract agreement might be subject to an audit by a U.S. authority; however, it is highly unlikely.

**QUESTION:** Will income tax returns need to be filed with an income tax authority of Rwanda?

**ANSWER:** No.

**QUESTION:** Please clarify Tax structure of USA i.e. any withholding tax/tax deduction at source applicability etc.?

**ANSWER:** There will be no taxes withheld in the U.S. The price provided in the Financial Proposal must be inclusive of any tax and duties in the country of the Contractor.

**QUESTION:** We understand the financial proposal is to be made in US Dollars only. If currency is different, please clarify.

**ANSWER:** All payments will be made in U.S. dollars.

**QUESTION:** The RfP does not specify payment schedule or terms and conditions. Please provide a detailed payment schedule against each deliverable.

**ANSWER:** The Consultant may propose a payment schedule that works within the deliverables of the project. Payment schedule will be negotiated with the winning bidder.

**QUESTION:** The payment to Consultant is mentioned only against task 0 i.e. signing of sub contract. Please inform when will the balance payments be released.

**ANSWER:** The Consultant may propose a payment schedule that works within the deliverables of the project. Payment schedule will be negotiated with the winning bidder.

**QUESTION:** Will the complete network model of Burundi, Rwanda and DRC along with interconnection details be provided?

**ANSWER:** We will provide models of the Rwanda network only.

**QUESTION:** What version of PSS/E will the Rwanda network model be provided in?

**ANSWER:** Current models of the Rwanda network were developed in the PSS/E version 33.

**QUESTION:** Is it mandatory to conduct the training at a single location?

**ANSWER:** No, if there is an adequate explanation of why the training should be split between two separate locations.

**QUESTION:** For larger exposure to participants, we are planning the training to take place at two separate locations (one week at each location). Will USEA pay for transportation between the locations?

**ANSWER:** USEA will bear travel costs if there is an adequate explanation of why the training should be split between two separate locations.

**QUESTION:** If we include an industrial site visit (approximately 250 km away from the training site), will USEA pay for the transportation or will we need to make provisions in the financial proposal?

**ANSWER:** USEA will bear travel costs if an industrial site visit is an integral part of the training.

**QUESTION:** The RfP states that “the training will utilize current models of Rwanda Network,” however, the Operator training simulator (OTS) by default takes the network model from SCADA only. Will it be acceptable if we utilize the Rwanda model for offline training and conduct hands-on OTS training based on our existing SCADA system?

**ANSWER:** That will be acceptable.

**QUESTION:** We intend to have 4-5 personnel engaged in the design and development of the training curriculum, in addition to 2 subject matter experts who will visit Rwanda. Are we require to provide relevant experience and bio data sheet for the curriculum design team?

**ANSWER:** Please provide relevant experience for EVERY staff member who is included in the Financial Proposal. The bio data sheets should be provided for any KEY personnel (subject matter experts and trainers).

**QUESTION:** Do we need to disclose all indirect rates and cost allocation bases and pools?

**ANSWER:** No.

**QUESTION:** Do we need to include direct (raw/pay) labor rates and methodology for marking up to fully burdened rates used in the Basis of Estimate? OR do we need to simply show the fully burdened rates used in the BOE to arrive at the line item budget (milestone)?

**ANSWER:** No. The fully burdened rates will be sufficient.

**QUESTION:** Do we need to show our fee percentage?

**ANSWER:** No.

**QUESTION:** What are the terms and instructions on billing and payment?

**ANSWER:** The subcontractor shall invoice USEA for costs and expenses incurred (all relevant expenses must be approved in advance and supported by original receipts). USEA shall make payment to the subcontractor within 30 days of USEA's receipt of a proper invoice. Payment schedule will be negotiated with the winning bidder.

**QUESTION:** What are the terms for deliverable inspections and acceptance?

**ANSWER:** USEA will review all deliverables before passing them on to the utility and will notify the subcontractor if the utility has any comments and concerns. Deliverables will be considered accepted once all USEA and the utility's questions and comments have been addressed.

**QUESTION:** We are a US company. However, we have non-US affiliates in other countries. If awarded, we may provide services from our non-US affiliates, is this allowable or would the AO be issuing a waiver in such a case?

**ANSWER:** There will be no waivers granted. All services must comply with the standard provisions.

**QUESTION:** We are a US company and have DCAA submitted provisional billing rates. Our non-US affiliates may be teaming with us; will they be subject to Indirect Costs – De Minimis Rate?

**ANSWER:** Yes.

**QUESTION:** Are there any limitations of liability? If yes, to what value is it limited?

**ANSWER:** This is how the issue of liability is addressed in our typical subcontract agreement.

#### ARTICLE 20 -- LIMITATION OF LIABILITY (SERVICES)

The subcontractor shall indemnify and hold harmless USEA in accordance with the requirements of Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) Clause 52.246-25, hereby incorporated by reference. For purposes of this Subcontract agreement, replace references to "Government" with "USEA" and replace "USEA" with "The subcontractor".

In addition, the subcontractor shall give USEA prompt notice of any claim hereunder.

Subcontractor's liability can only be invoked in case of a proven causal link between damage and erroneous execution of this contract by Subcontractor. Subcontractor's liability is limited to direct damage, all consequential or immaterial damage being

excluded. The total amount of indemnity for damage is in any case limited to the amount of the engineering fee of Subcontractor for the contract or part of the contract involved in the damage claim.

**QUESTION:** We understand that consultant's staff would be issued letter of invitation for processing of VISA to Rwanda.

**ANSWER:** Yes, we will provide visa support to the consultants visiting Rwanda for the initial assessment.

**QUESTION:** We understand that the venue for training of Rwandan officials is to be arranged and paid by us. We request you to inform if we are required to pay any payments/compensation etc. to the Rwandan officials.

**ANSWER:** The training venue is to be arranged by the Consultant. We will reimburse the Consultant for the training venue renting/leasing fees (if the Consultant does not own the venue). The Consultant will **NOT** provide any payments/compensation to the Rwandan trainees.

**QUESTION:** Kindly confirm that all costs pertaining consultants staff would be borne by the consultant including travel tickets, visa cost, lodging and boarding and local travel during the training.

**ANSWER:** We assumed that the training will take place in or near the city of the Consultant's work/residence. If that is not the case, USEA will bear all travel expenses, including roundtrip tickets, per diem, visa fees, international health insurance (if necessary) and local ground transportation.