

SERVICE PROCUREMENT NOTICE

Vocational Education and Training (VET) Quality Assurance Development Republic of Croatia

1. Publication reference

EuropeAid/127474/D/SER/HR

2. Procedure

Restricted

3. Programme

IPA

4. Financing

IPA for the Human Resources Development Component in Croatia 2007-2009

5. Contracting Authority

Agency for Vocational Education and Training (AVET), Department for Financing and Contracting of IPA Programme

CONTRACT SPECIFICATION

6. Nature of contract

Fee-based

7. Contract description

This service contract aims at facilitating an integrated and systemic approach to quality assurance (QA) development in Vocational Education and Training (VET) in line with the Copenhagen/Maastricht issues, with emphasis on implementing this concept in practice. The contract will also assist in the improvement of information exchange on QA issues between VET providers and the general public.

This will be carried out through three different project components, focussed on the following activities:

1. Institutional developments towards the identification of QA tools and mechanism to be gradually implemented
2. Comprehensive self-evaluation at the micro level involving training and pilot implementation of the self-evaluation tools
3. Further improvements of the Vocational Education and Training Information System (VETIS) and a systematic exchange of experience and information on the VET QA

8. Number and titles of lots

Not applicable

9. Maximum budget

EUR 1,740,000

10. Scope for additional services

The Contracting Authority may, at its own discretion, extend the project in duration and/or scope subject to the availability of funding, up to a maximum not exceeding the length and value of the initial contract. Any extension of the contract would be subject to satisfactory performance by the Contractor.

CONDITIONS OF PARTICIPATION

11. Eligibility

Participation is open to all legal persons [participating either individually or in a grouping (consortium) of candidates] which are established in a Member State of the European Union or in a country or territory of the regions covered and/or authorised by the specific instruments applicable to the programme under which the contract is financed (see also item 30 below). Participation is also open to international organisations. The participation of natural persons is governed by the specific instruments applicable to the programme under which the contract is financed.

12. Candidature

All eligible natural and legal persons (as per item 11 above) or groupings of such persons (consortia) may apply.

A consortium may be a permanent, legally-established grouping or a grouping which has been constituted informally for a specific tender procedure. All members of a consortium (ie, the leader and all other members) are jointly and severally liable to the Contracting Authority.

The participation of an ineligible natural or legal person (as per item 11) will result in the automatic exclusion of that person. In particular, if that ineligible person belongs to a consortium, the whole consortium will be excluded.

13. Number of applications

No more than one application can be submitted by a natural or legal person whatever the form of participation (as an individual legal entity or as leader or member of a consortium submitting an application). In the event that a natural or legal person submits more than one application, all applications in which that person has participated will be excluded.

14. Shortlist alliances prohibited

Any tenders received from tenderers comprising firms other than those mentioned in the short-listed application forms will be excluded from this restricted tender procedure. Short-listed candidates may not form alliances or subcontract to each other for the contract in question.

15. Grounds for exclusion

As part of the application form, candidates must submit a signed declaration, included in the standard application form, to the effect that they are not in any of the exclusion situations listed in Section 2.3.3 of the Practical Guide to contract procedures for EC external actions

16. Sub-contracting

Not allowed.

17. Number of candidates to be short-listed

On the basis of the applications received, between 4-8 candidates will be invited to submit detailed tenders for this contract. If the number of eligible candidates meeting the selection criteria is less than the minimum of 4, the Contracting Authority may invite the candidates who satisfy the criteria to submit a tender.

PROVISIONAL TIMETABLE

18. Provisional date of invitation to tender

July 2009

19. Provisional commencement date of the contract

May 2010

20. Initial period of implementation of tasks and possible extension of the contract

24 months with the possibility to extend the project in duration and scope. Any extension of the contract would be subject to satisfactory performance by the Consultant.

SELECTION AND AWARD CRITERIA

21. Selection criteria

The following selection criteria will be applied to candidates. In the case of applications submitted by a consortium, these selection criteria will be applied to the consortium as a whole:

- 1) Economic and financial capacity of candidate (based on item 3 of the application form). In case of applicant being a public body, equivalent information should be provided.
 - (a) The average annual turnover of the candidate for the years 2007 and 2008 must be equal to or exceed EUR 1,000,000
 - (b) The cash and cash equivalents at the end of year 2007 and 2008 are positive for the candidate.
- 2) Professional capacity of candidate (based on items 4 and 5 of the application form)
 - (a) at least 10 staff members currently work for the candidate in one or several of the following fields: Vocational Education and Training (VET), Quality Assurance in education, Management Information Systems in education.
 - (b) at least 20% of all staff working for the candidate in the year 2008 in one or several of the following fields: Vocational Education and Training (VET), Quality Assurance in education, Management Information Systems in education are permanently employed.
- 3) Technical capacity of candidate (based on items 5 and 6 of the application form)
 - (a) The candidate has worked on at least one project covering all the following requirements:
 - a budget of at least EUR 1,500,000 (contribution of candidate)

- completed in 2006, 2007, 2008 or in 2009 by the deadline for submission of applications¹
- in one or several of the following fields: Vocational Education and Training (VET), Quality Assurance in education, Management Information Systems in education
- implemented in a country eligible under IPA²

An economic operator may, where appropriate and for a particular contract, rely on the capacities of other entities, regardless of the legal nature of the links which it has with them. It must in that case prove to the Contracting Authority that it will have at its disposal the resources necessary for performance of the contract, for example by producing an undertaking on the part of those entities to place those resources at its disposal. Such entities, for instance the parent company of the economic operator, must respect the same rules of eligibility and notably that of nationality, as the economic operator.

If more than 8 eligible candidates meet the above selection criteria, the relative strengths and weaknesses of the applications of these candidates must be reexamined to identify the eight best applications for the tender procedure. The only factors which will be taken into consideration during this re-examination are:

1) The total number of projects managed by the candidate according to criterion 3, in case several candidates would have the same number of eligible projects fulfilling the selection criteria, the candidates will be ranked in descending order according to the total amount of their own contribution to the projects eligible under criterion 3.

22. Award criteria

Best value for money.

APPLICATION

23. Deadline for receipt of applications

15:00 Central European Time on 11 May 2009

Any application received after this deadline will not be considered.

¹ Please refer to the Article 23 of this PN

² EU Member States , Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, FYROM, Montenegro, Serbia, Turkey and Kosovo under UNSC Resolution 1244/99

24. Application format and details to be provided

Applications must be submitted using the standard application form (available from the following Internet address: http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/work/procedures/implementation/services/index_en.htm), whose format and instructions must be strictly observed.

Any additional documentation (brochure, letter, etc) sent with an application will not be taken into consideration.

25. How applications may be submitted

Applications must be submitted in English exclusively to the Contracting Authority:

- EITHER by recorded delivery (official postal service) to :
Ms. Aleksandra Bajs
Agency for Vocational Education and Training
(Agencija za strukovno obrazovanje)
Department for Financing and Contracting of IPA Programme
HR-10000 Zagreb, Lastovska 23/II,
Croatia
- OR hand delivered (including courier services) directly to the Contracting Authority in return for a signed and dated receipt to:

Ms. Aleksandra Bajs
Agency for Vocational Education and Training
(Agencija za strukovno obrazovanje)
Department for Financing and Contracting of IPA Programme
HR-10000 Zagreb, Lastovska 23/II,
Croatia

The Contract title and the Publication reference (see item 1 above) must be clearly marked on the envelope containing the application and must always be mentioned in all subsequent correspondence with the Contracting Authority.

Applications submitted by any other means will not be considered.

26. Alteration or withdrawal of applications

Candidates may alter or withdraw their applications by written notification prior to the deadline for submission of applications. No application may be altered after this deadline.

Any such notification of alteration or withdrawal shall be prepared and submitted in accordance with Item 25. The outer envelope (and the relevant inner envelope if used) must be marked 'Alteration' or 'Withdrawal' as appropriate.

27. Operational language

All written communications for this tender procedure and contract must be in English.

28. Additional information

Not applicable

29. Date of publication of contract forecast

26 August 2008

30. Legal basis

Council Regulation (EC) No 1085/2006 of 17 July 2006 establishing an Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA)

The conclusion of the contract resulting from this tender procedure is subject to the fulfillment of the following condition:

1. The conclusion between the Commission and Croatia of a Financing Agreement implementing the Human Resources Development Operational Programme for 2007-2009 (2007HR05IPO001) under the Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance.