



basic education
Department:
Basic Education
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

NON COMPULSORY BRIEFING SESSION HELD VIRTUALLY – MICROSOFT TEAMS

DATE: 14 OCTOBER 2021

TIME: 10:00 to 11:00

TENDER NUMBER RFQ-DBE07/2021

DESCRIPTION: APPOINTMENT OF A SERVICE PROVIDER TO CONDUCT AN INVESTIGATION ON IRREGULAR EXPENDITURE

1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION

Ms Metula welcomed everyone and introduced the Department of Basic Education's (DBE) team; Mr S Banda, Mr D Moukangwe (Supply Chain Management) and Ms E Mmola. She gave the Bidders an opportunity to introduce themselves (indicating the individual's names and the name of the company/ organisation one is presenting).

2. BID PRESENTATION

Presentation of the Terms of Reference (TORs) by Ms E Mmola

3. SUPPLY CHAIN MANAGEMENT (SCM) MATTERS

The SCM indicated that:

- The briefing session was non-compulsory as indicated in the Tender advert. Non-attendance to the briefing session does not lead to disqualification of the Bidders' proposal/s.
- The tender is closing on **22 October 2021 at 11:00**. A bid which is submitted after 11:00 will be regarded as late and will not be accepted by the DBE.
- The discussions during the briefing session and the questions raised after the briefing session will be consolidated, responded to and uploaded on the Department's website (www.etenders.gov.za) eTender Portal (www.etenders.gov.za) where the tender advert and documents are published. Bidders can still forward the clarity seeking questions regarding the bid until seven days before the tender closes which will be 20 October 2021 at 16:00 (as indicated in the tender advert). The questions should be directed to Tenders@dbe.gov.za.
- Bidders must read the Mandatory Requirements carefully as listed in the TORs and ensure that they respond as required.

4. QUESTIONS RAISED AND RESPONSES PROVIDED (during the briefing session)

No.	Question raised	Response/ clarity
1.	a. Clarity on secondment arrangement, will the team use the report template or letterhead of the service provider or they will use the Department of Basic Education (DBE) Internal Audit, and there is no oversight required or any quality assurance?	a. The work will be done using the DBE letter head and reporting will be to the Director Internal Audit and the report format will be the DBE (Internal Audit). The quality assurance will be done internally.
2.	a. If the company is less than 5 years, but members are more than 5 years, are they going to be disqualified for submitting the tender? b. If one of the members is holding ACFP instead of ACFE is he/she allowed to be part of the team?	a. As per the TORs paragraph 4.1 requires the bidder or company experience of a minimum of 5 years as a pre-qualification requirement. The evaluation of staff experience and the company as per the evaluation criteria is separated taking into consideration that other companies may be new, and others are older in the industry. The company will be disqualified if less than 5 years of experience. b. The TORs stipulated the ACFE membership as a requirement. c. Yes, most of the work will be done at DBE premises, but

	<p>c. The three investigators that will be seconded, are they going to be full time at the DBE for the period of the project?</p> <p>d. Can the Bidder add the fourth team member to do quality assurance of the report?</p>	<p>in some instances the team might be required to travel. The arrangements will be done, as travel requirement will depend on the nature of that particular investigation as not all require travel. If travelling is required, the DBE will make those logistical arrangements that is from DBE to our other affected offices either Provinces or Implementing Agent if required.</p> <p>d. No. There is an Investigation Committee in the Department including Legal Services and Labour Relations to advice where this expertise is required.</p>
3.	<p>a. What type of infrastructure project are these; is it bricks and mortar, water, sanitation or other types of projects?</p> <p>b. Where are these project funded, are the purely funded by the government or partially funded through global funding?</p>	<p>a. Most of our schools are built with brick and mortar although we have few which are Modular structures.</p> <p>b. The projects are funded within the Department of Basic Education (DBE) and not through global funding.</p>
4.	<p>a. If a team member belong to ACFP and not ACFE are they allowed to be part of the team?</p>	<p>a. The TORs stipulate the ACFE membership as a requirement.</p>
5.	<p>a. If they have no member ACFE member will be automatically disqualified?</p>	<p>a. In terms of the TORs it is stipulated that they must be members of the ACFE. It is not necessary that they have certified fraud examiner as a professional qualification for professional certification, but they must be members of the ACFE</p>
6.	<p>a. Will the e-mail/ electronic submissions be accepted?</p>	<p>a. The submissions/ proposals must be submitted as hard copies. Emailed submission will not be accepted by the DBE</p>
7.	<p>a. Splitting of the experience in terms of the three staff to be seconded, what is the split in terms of seniority?</p>	<p>a. The TORs are clear in terms of experience required for staff, and there is no split between the team leader and the junior staff. The TORs also indicated a minimum of 5 years' experience; it also indicates that three staff members are required and the quality assurance will be done by the Department.</p>

	<p>b. The splitting has a bearing on the hourly rate, and what if the company has staff member with experience of 7 years for example which is more than 5 years?</p>	<p>b. Yes, if the company has staff with more than 5 years' experience, they can be included because the TORs states a minimum of 5 years' experience.</p>
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5. CONCLUSION

Bidders were reminded:

- To be mindful of the tender closing date as indicated in the Tender advert.
- That they can still ask questions until 20 October 2021 at 16:00; questions should be directed to Tenders@dbe.gov.za.

Ms Metula thanked the Bidders for attending the briefing session and wished them well with the preparation and submission of their bids.

The session was adjourned.

6. QUESTIONS RAISED (after the briefing session) AND RESPONSES PROVIDED

No.	Question raised	Response/ clarity
1.	<p>Paragraph 1 - "Background indicates that the service provider will be requested to second a team of three (3) investigators. The investigation team will report to the Director for Internal Audit".</p> <p>Kindly advise the do you mean:</p> <p>1.1 The investigators are required to report for duty at the office for the period of the project or</p> <p>Do you require that the service provider/bidder dedicate the 3 investigators to solely work on Basic Education, irrespective of them working from the service provider's offices?</p>	<p>The secondment of staff – we are referring to the assigned staff will be utilised at DBE for the duration of investigation which is three months under the service provider appointed. The seconded staff will report the assigned work to DBE (Internal Audit). Timesheets will be required for the time spent on the investigation for example, even though the service provider might require it for your staff and check it for your own administrative purpose.</p> <p>If you assigned staff to conduct an investigation at DBE they must be available for DBE (Internal Audit) for the official working hours.</p>

2.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. What is the expected appointment date? b. Whether the team will be required to work exclusively on this matter? c. Whether the team will be required to work at the premises of the DBE? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The expected appointment date will start once the procurement process is finalised; the estimated date is January 2022. b. The team will be required to work on investigation for irregular expenditure. c. The team will be required to work at the DBE office, and according to the COVID –19 staff capacity requirement in the building.
3.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. In terms of the seconded employees, where will the three employees be working from? Will it be the offices of DBE in Pretoria? b. Will the employees be able to work virtually or will the secondees be full time office based? c. What are the office hours at DBE? d. Will any part of the assessment include an assessment of whether the infrastructure projects were successfully completed (i.e. quality review, delivery against bill of quantities etc.)? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The assigned employees will be working at DBE offices in Pretoria. b. The COVID-19 capacity requirement as directed by the department will be adhered to. We have rotation and most meetings are done virtually although face to face meetings are held within the precaution requirement to comply with COVID -19 prevention measures. Other alternatives will be communicated in terms of the rotation schedules for employees. c. Office hours are 8:00 – 16:30. d. No, assessment of quality of completed projects as this will increase the scope.
4.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. We understand that DBE requires an investigation of irregular expenditure on infrastructure related projects. However, the RFQ does not indicate the number of transactions to be reviewed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The number of cases to be investigated were not indicated as there are many cases being investigated which cannot be completed by these requested members for three months only. We currently have other internal staff members working on other cases. We have requested hourly rate for staff members to be assigned and the period is for three months as per specification.

<p>5.</p>	<p>a. The number of transactions that would form part of the investigation on irregular expenditure.</p> <p>b. The process to be followed in terms of invoicing; we understand that the invoicing would be in tranches, however apart from the initial 60% invoice, and the balance of the 40% would be paid with the final report. What will be a reasonable timeframe for the Dept to review the report for completeness before submission for the final payment?</p> <p>c. The assumption we are making on the project is that all documentation is readily available to commence with work, should we be successfully appointed. However, from past experience documentation is not available and there is a long period when documents are available. Kindly advise on a reasonable timeframe for submission of documentation to the service provider should there be an instance that additional documentation is required?</p>	<p>a. The number of cases to be investigated were not indicated as there are many cases being investigated which cannot be completed by these requested members for three months only. The request is that bidders provide the rate per hour of staff to be assigned for the stated period of three (3) months.</p> <p>b. The review process will take a week depending on the available evidence presented by team members. The review will be a build up during the investigation supervision also.</p> <p>c. The documentation will be available for investigation, although in certain cases some information might need to be requested from Implementing Agents.</p>
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The discussions during the briefing session and the questions raised after the briefing session will be consolidated, responded to and uploaded on the Department's website www.education.gov.za and the National Treasury website www.etenders.gov.za where the tender advert and documents are published.

THE RFQ CLOSING DATE AND TIME IS EXTENDED TO 27 OCTOBER 2021 AT 11:00.