

## FAQ Call for tender ELARG/2011/S-252

Contract notice: 2011/S 124-204970

Update: 8 September 2011

**Q:** Given the timing of your tender notice, coinciding with the summer period, and in order to ensure better quality work from all bidders, might you envisage extending the deadline for submission of tenders?

**A:** Please note that the deadline for submission of bids already takes into account the summer period. As you know, for calls for tender with a pre-information notice, there is a minimum of 36 calendar days for the submission of bids.

We have significantly extended this minimum period and allowed 72 days from the publication of the contract notice till the deadline. Consequently, we can not envisage the extension of deadline.

**Q:** Can you confirm that we are correctly assuming that a subcontractor providing services for a value less than 20% of the contract value does not need to demonstrate their financial capacity as mentioned in 4.5.b (p.24-25)?

**A:** No, as reads on the 'Tender Specifications' 4.5.b (pag.24-25) *"Where the bid is submitted by a tenderer who intends to subcontract part of the tasks or entrust them to another economic operator, the subcontractors or economic operators involved must demonstrate that they have the requisite professional, economic, financial and technical capacity."*

**Q:** Can you confirm that we are correctly assuming that a firm that is an associated partner as mentioned in 4.5.C criterion 1, footnote 5, is not considered to be a subcontractor?

**A:** Yes, please see 4.5.C criterion 1, footnote 5 definition *"Firms / persons regularly cooperating/working with the tenderer through a formal agreement"*.

**Q:** Could DG Enlargement provide its visual identity for use on visual material?

**Similar question:** Please could you confirm which logo should be used on any visual material developed for the case studies. Should this be the DG's logo (jigsaw pieces) or just the Commission flag?

**A:** DG Enlargement does not have a visual identity that tenderers are obliged to use. Regarding visual identity, Tender Specifications stipulate that "The Contractor will be required to give advice ... on visual identity." (p.5); as well as "Advice on graphic aspects such as colouring schemes, layouts, visual identity etc." (p.10)

**Q:** In the case of a consortium, is the documentary evidence for criterion 2 (examples of up to 10 services/contracts provided during the last 3 years) required at the level of the consortium or for each partner separately?

**Similar question:** Financial and economic capacity – Page 24 of the Technical Specifications - Does the Commission want to see financial and economic capacity for each of sub-contractors, or only from the lead contractor in the case of a consortium bid? Are there threshold criteria for the percentage of work intended for a sub-contractor that triggers such need for financial and economic capacity information to be presented?

**Similar question:** With reference to the selection criteria, could you please clarify whether consortium partners and subcontractors need to provide all 'professional capacity' information in addition to completing Annex 1, namely:

Full name, address, telephone & fax
VAT status
Bank account number & bank name & address
Certificate of enrolment in trade register
Legal form
Articles of association
Names & duties of managerial staff

**Similar question:** Is it expected that each partner/subcontractor in a consortium needs to provide between 5 and 10 examples concerning the documentary evidence for Technical capacity criterion 2?

**A:** "Where the bid is submitted by a consortium, the economic and financial capacity as well as the technical capacity must be ascertained at the level of the consortium." (p.24 of Tender Specifications) In order to establish that the selection criteria are met at the level of consortium, the contracting authority needs the documentary evidence submitted by each consortium partner.

In addition, "In the case of a bid presented by a consortium or a group of service providers, the bid must be accompanied by a letter signed by each member pledging to provide all the services proposed in the bid and specifying the role and qualifications of each member." (p.21 of Tender Specifications)

Regarding threshold criteria for sub-contractors, as reads the 'Tender Specifications' 4.5.b (p.24-25) "Where the bid is submitted by a tenderer who intends to subcontract part of the tasks or entrust them to another economic operator, the *subcontractors or economic operators involved must demonstrate that they have the requisite professional, economic, financial and technical capacity.*"

The selection criteria for technical capacity as well as economic and financial capacity will be assessed in relation to the combined capacities of all members of the consortium, as a whole. Therefore, the necessary documentary evidence in relation to Article 4.5c, Criterion 2, should be up to 10 services/contracts in total.

**Q:** **Could you please specify the tasks of the following profiles:**  
 - **Analyst**  
 - **Researcher**  
 - **Moderator**

**A:** **Analyst** - (e.g. information collection, analysis of media landscape, analysis of existing content)

**Analyst - Evaluation of an action's impact** (e.g. evaluations and impact assessment of information and communication activities including ex-ante evaluation of needs and problem analysis, cost effectiveness, etc.)

**Researcher** - (e.g. research to support the development and production of informative publications)

**Moderator** (e.g. moderation of visibility events, conferences, workshops, seminars)

**Q: Can we use existing media databases / social platforms, or do we need to create our own?**

**A:** According to Tender Specifications, contractors are expected to set-up long-term media partnerships to support DG Enlargement's information and communication activities. This is expected to be done through 1/ Setting-up, maintenance and regular update of a media database of journalists and editors who cover enlargement-related topics (e.g. EU, enlargement policy, political, economic, both audiovisual and print) in EU Member States. 2/ Setting-up, maintenance and regular update of a media database of journalists/editors of talks shows and debates, including travel journalists, photo magazines, family or women's magazines etc. Tender Specifications do not stipulate the way that Contractors must use in order to achieve the above objectives.

**Q: Before distributing information within the context of the services to be provided, would the content first need to be checked and approved by the Commission's press office?**

**A:** The approval of the European Commission is necessary before the implementation of any information and communication activity by the Contractor.

**Q: Within the framework, will there be provision for contracts to provide continuous services (e.g. databases, advisory groups / boards, helpline, periodical publications, website management), which all contractors can access, to ensure consistency and quality of service.**

**A:** Tender Specifications (p.16) stipulate that: "In their bids, tenderers must bear in mind that work performed by the service provider for DG Enlargement in the execution of the Framework Contract must, as far as possible, be reusable. This means that contractors must be ready to share the outcomes of services rendered with other service providers under the Framework Contract to assure the consistency of DG Enlargement communication policy."

**Q: Question related to: Technical Specifications section e) Media relations and study visits for journalists:**

**How do you define a VIP/prominent journalist? i.e do you mean 'editors' as opposed to 'day to day journalists'?**

**A:** The term "VIP" does not necessarily mean higher rank in an organisation. It is rather linked to the profile of a journalist as an established capacity in the area of EU enlargement / international relations.

**Q: How do you differentiate the purposes and composition of the Media Advisory Board and the VIP journalist network?**

**A:** Media Advisory Board is intended to be actively involved in media relation activities of DG Enlargement.

VIP journalist network is intended as a pool of journalists who can assist DG Enlargement with for example disseminating relevant information related to EU enlargement.

**Q: Question concerning Technical Specifications section g) Cooperation with 3<sup>rd</sup> Parties  
What does 'hosting enlargement Ambassadors/advocates' entail?**

**A:** Enlargement ambassadors can be invited to activities organised by DG Enlargement, including audiovisual production.

**Q:** **Question concerning Technical Specifications section g) Cooperation with 3<sup>rd</sup> Parties**

Does the Commission see the difference between NGO/CSO/interest group network and the Enlargement Ambassador/Advocates programmes to be that one is composed of organisations (the former) and the other of individuals (the latter)?

**A:** Yes.

**Q:** **Question concerning Annex 4 Price schedule**

**What is a 'Diva Box'?**

**A:** It's a hard drive for multimedia.

**Q:** **Page 26 of the Technical Specifications "documentary evidence"**

**The specifications ask for a 'short CV based on Europass template'. However there is only one version of the Europass template, which is the long version. Is there a specific 'short template' that tenderers should follow?**

**A:** There is only one Europass template that should be used. Short in this context means brevity.

**Q:** **Admissibility of non-written content - Will reviewers consider audiovisual information if included by a tenderer as part of its submission (e.g., for illustration of a case study or to further expand on agency experience)?**

**A:** Audiovisual information will not be considered during the evaluation of bids. Professional and technical capacity will be only established based on the templates in Annex 6 to Tender Specifications. To illustrate the audiovisual case study no.3 sample storyboards and other visuals at the tenderer's choice shall be used as indicated in the provisions of the case study.

**Q:** **Case Study n°2 What is the difference between the two requests related to "establishing working relations with 2-4 prominent journalists" in the 2 bullets points below? There seems to be a duplication.**

*- "Establish and maintain privileged working relations with two to four prominent journalists"*

*- "Establishment and maintaining of VIP journalist network, i.e. set up and maintain privileged working relations with two to four (depending on Member State size) prominent journalists."*

**A:** Indeed, the two bullet points have the same meaning.

**Q:** **How many CVs should tenderers propose for each staff position listed in Annex 4?**

**A:** The selection criterion no.3 in the Tender Specifications does not prescribe exact or minimum or maximum number of CVs per staff position. When filling in Annex 6, tenderers should keep in mind that the documentary evidence provided by the tenderer must enable the contracting authority to establish that tenderers and other applicants, including subcontractors if any, have the human resources needed to provide the services required.

- Q:** With regards to Annex 4 – section 4.1 ‘venue equipment package’:
- a. There is no indication as to the volume of people that the ‘package’ is for and therefore the number of units required for each equipment type (e.g. wireless microphones for Q/A sessions). Could you please clarify?
  - b. Should the package price reflect the unit costs listed under ‘venue equipment’ (4.2 onwards)?

**A:** a) The reason of requesting the price for the "package" type of service is the economy of scale. The tenderers are requested to indicate the global price for the venue equipment package that could be applied later for specific service contracts. Depending on the Terms of Reference for a specific communication action, future Framework Contractors may or may not opt for using this budget heading

b) Not necessarily. See the answer to the question (a).

- Q:** Page 27 of the Tender Specification states: ‘The technical tender should not include any of the documents referred to under the exclusion or selection criteria, not should it refer to matters already covered by the exclusion and selection criteria’. Assuming the CVs of the proposed team will be presented in the administrative part of the bid, what content does DG Enlargement expect in the technical tender concerning the team (award criterion b).

**A:** The award criterion b) Allocation of resources and quality of the day-to-day management of the work does not explicitly mention the team nor the "quality" of CVs. Under the award criterion b) the contracting authority will assess the quality of the tenderer's proposal for the operational, technical and financial management including follow-up of specific service contracts to be assigned in the future. CVs (or short bios) of the core team can be included.

- Q:** We are interested in participating in the ELARG/2011/S-252 however we cannot fulfil Criterion 1: we don't have branches or associated partners in 10 EU Member states.

**Will a response be reviewed without this?**

**A:** Your tender will be excluded if your consortium does not have branches or associated partners in at least 10 EU Member States.

Article 4.5 of the Tender Specifications states that "*Where the bid is submitted by a consortium, the economic and financial capacity as well as the technical capacity must be ascertained at the level of the consortium.*"

Article 4.5c further states that "*Bids from tenderers who do not satisfy the exclusion and/or selection criteria will not be considered for the award of the contract. Tenderers who fail to supply the documents required under these Tender Specifications for the purpose of the exclusion and selection criteria will be excluded.*"

- Q:** Should the financial, technical and administrative sections be presented separately (in different binders) or all together in 1 single binder?

**A:** Please read carefully the instructions given in the Invitation to Tender sections (4), (5) and 6) and in the Tender Specifications Article 4.3. The application form provides the formal presentation of the tender. Particular care should be taken to provide the financial bid and technical bid in two separate envelopes. Section (4) in the Invitation to Tender reads:

*"(4) Presentation of the offer:*

*Tenders must be placed inside two sealed envelopes. The inner envelope, addressed to the department indicated in the invitation to tender, should be marked as follows:*

*"Invitation to tender № ELARG 2011/S-252 - not to be opened by the internal mail department". If self-adhesive envelopes are used, they must be sealed with adhesive tape and the sender must sign across this tape. The inner envelope must also contain two sealed envelopes, one containing the technical specifications and the other the financial bid. Each of these envelopes must clearly indicate the content ("Technical" and "Financial").*

*Non respect of the above presentation requirements may lead to the exclusion from the award procedure for this contract."*

As long as the given instructions are respected you may choose how to best present the other categories in your bid.

**Q:** 1. With reference to Annex 6 to the Tender Specifications (Technical Capacity) could you please confirm that, in case of Consortium, each Member has to provide those information (technical capacity) and not only the Lead member (which will provide the "sum" of the information regarding each Member).

2. With reference to the professional capacity information required in at page 24 of Tender Specification, could you please clarify whether each consortium partner has to provide the following information?

Full name, address, telephone and fax

Vat status

Bank account number & bank name & address

Certificate of enrolment in trade register

Legal form

Articles of association

Names and duties of managerial staff.

It's our opinion that those information should be provided only by the Lead Member, but your previous answers (clarifications on 28.07.2011) seem no to have clarified that point.

In addition, is there a model referring to those information to be filled in ? ... (by the Lead Member or by each Member of the consortium, according to you answer).

**A:** 1. The selection criteria for technical capacity as well as economic and financial capacity will be assessed in relation to the combined capacities of all members of the consortium, as a whole. Therefore, the necessary documentary evidence in relation to Article 4.5c in the Tender Specifications and the information to be provided in Annex 6c) Technical Capacity, should be at the level of the Consortium.

2. The requirements in Article 4.5a) of the Tender Specifications, Professional Capacity, applies to each member of the Consortium. Please note also that Annex 1, Identification of the

tenderer, must be completed by all members of the Consortium as well as by subcontractors.

As concerns the information to be given under Article 4.5a) no model document has been provided.

- Q:**
- 1) In the Tender Specifications, under “Section 2.3 Expected Services”, item “h” refers to “Follow up of the actions and measurement of their impact”. However, in Annex 8 to the Tender Specifications, under “Section 3. Content of the Bid”, there is also a separate section “3.3 Plan for the evaluation of the impact of the actions undertaken”. Could you please clarify the difference between these two sections?
  - 2) In terms of the page limits for Case Study 1, 2 and 3, could you please clarify whether visuals within the text (such as pictures, graphs and tables) should be included in the page restrictions (or in addition to the page restrictions)?
  - 3) With reference to section 4.3 (submission of bids) of the Tender Specifications (page 20), could you please confirm where the ‘standard application form’ should go? Would it be correct to position it at the start of Chapter 3 - Technical Tender?
  - 4) Could you please clarify whether the proposed budgets for Case study 1, 2 and 3 should be included in the “technical” envelope or the “financial” envelope? If they are included in the “technical” envelope, with the case study responses, this would mean that elements of the “financial” offer are disclosed within the technical bid. We would be grateful for your clarification on this.

**A:** 1) "Follow-up of the actions and measurement of their impact" in Section 2.3 Expected services refers to services that would be specifically requested by the Commission in the context of one or the other campaign or action. Section “3.3 Plan for the evaluation of the impact of the actions undertaken” in Annex 8, section 3, refers to the continuous evaluation activities the contractor would always undertake - their own regular assessment of how the project is moving on and reaching its targets.

2) The maximum number of pages for the case studies varies from one case to another. However, as instructions for one of the case studies says: "The proposal for this case study should not exceed [15] pages (excl. annexes) in length and may be accompanied by visuals, at the tenderer's choice, to illustrate his creative approach." The visuals can be included in the annexes, hence are excluded from the maximum page length.

3) The application form provides the formal presentation of the tender and it can be inserted in the technical envelope. Please pay particular attention to Article (4) of the Invitation to Tender, which states the following:

*“(4) Presentation of the offer:*

*Tenders must be placed inside two sealed envelopes. The inner envelope, addressed to the department indicated in the invitation to tender, should be marked as follows:*

*“Invitation to tender № ELARG 2011/S-252 - not to be opened by the internal mail department”. If self-adhesive envelopes are used, they must be sealed with adhesive tape and the sender must sign across this tape. The inner envelope must also contain two sealed envelopes, one containing the technical specifications and the other the financial bid. Each of these envelopes must clearly indicate the content (“Technical” and “Financial”).*

*Non respect of the above presentation requirements may lead to the exclusion from the award*

*procedure for this contract."*

4) The budgets to be included in the Case Studies are fictional as they have no influence on the price component of the award. They will exclusively be assessed at technical evaluation stage. These case study budgets will be a means for the evaluators to test the capacity of potential framework contractors to ensure quality in the budgets submitted for future specific contracts following renewed competitive tendering, and to ensure a rational use of resources for maximum impact. Aspects of quality and resource-effectiveness will be of key significance, rather than individual unit prices or lump sum.

The Tender Specifications indicate the following under heading 4.7 "Case studies": *"Tenderers will present three case studies (...), describing (...) the budget which they intend to allocate, broken down item by item. (...) These cases (...) are purely a simulation of a fictional request for services, for the purpose of evaluating the quality of the services which the tenderer would be capable of providing in the context of a renewed competitive tendering procedure."*

The Tender Specifications, under heading 4.9 "Award of the Framework Contract, Technical evaluation", foresee an award criterion 2g reading:

"g) Rational use of resources: Quality of preparation of the budget. Maximisation of the impact of the action."

Annex 3 to the Tender Specifications "Case studies" indicates a maximum budget for each case study. It further requires *"A detailed implementation budget, accompanied by an estimation of the impact of the action proposed."*

**Q:** In the tender specifications under "3.4 Team to be set up" it is stated that tenderers must clearly designate a senior manager as project leader. Is the project leader expected to be the team leader of each individual contract as well or can we assign different team leaders to individual contracts? If latter is the case, could you please clarify where we shall indicate the day rate for team leaders?

**A:** Senior manager position mentioned under the article "3.4. Team to be set up" of the Tender Specifications corresponds to the position "1.1 Director, senior manager" in the Annex 4. This person is expected to be the European Commission's contact point, the sole interlocutor to whom it will address any requests and who must attend the follow-up meetings. Individual communication projects to be assigned under this framework contract can be led by the expert listed as "1.2 Senior project leader" in the Annex 4.

**Q:** Criterion 3 of the technical capacity criteria refers to "director - senior manager" among other senior staff. In the price schedule, item 1.1 also covers "director" together with "senior manager". Since we usually have one director for the overall framework contract, could you please clarify whether this refers to a single person/position or it covers in general all directors and senior managers?

**A:** The position referred to in the Criterion 3 as "director – senior manager" corresponds to the budget item "1.1 Director, senior manager". It is thus a single person.

**Q:** Could you please clarify what the difference is between 6.2 and 6.37 in the price schedule.



**A:** The budget item "6.2. Original Music (with assignment of rights)" stands for the originally composed musical pieces, whereas the item "6.37 Original music score" means that just components or imitations ("pastiche") of the original music is used.

**Q:** **Could you please clarify if the position '6.13 ENG equipment including lighting and sound' in the price schedule is inclusive of staff.**

**A:** No, the budget position 6.13 in the Annex 4 is excluding staff.

**Q:** **With regard to Annex 8, 'Standard Application Form', can you please clarify how to complete this form. Is anything expected to be filled in under 3. Content of the Bid and 4. Case studies?**

**A:** Bidders must fill in all sections of the Annex 8 "Standard Application Form". The bid should be structured according to the template provided in the Annex 8. Both section "3.Content of the bid" and section "4.Case studies" must be filled in. Section "3.Content of the bid" corresponds to the award criteria for the technical tender. "Section 4.Case studies" must contain the proposal for the case studies prepared according to the instructions in the Annex 3 in terms of the structure and length.

**Q:** **Can you please confirm whether for each case study the budget is to be included in the page limit, or can it be part of the annex?**

**A:** The budget for the case studies does not count into the page limit set for individual case studies in the Annex 3.

**Q:** **Can we consider, in the preparation of the budget, costs for services not included in the price schedule but proposed in our case study? (for instance, the cost of specific gadgets or the cost of the media buying?).**

**As a matter of fact, referring to Case 3, it is said that the maximum indicative budget for this action should be 1.000.000,00 euro and that the budget must cover costs related to dissemination. If we consider that the dissemination of audiovisual products can be realized through an advertising campaign, we should indicate the specific cost of the media buying which is not included in the price schedule (annex 4). Can we thus provide you – referring to case studies - with a description of costs non included in the price schedule?**

**A:** Yes, you may include in your budget costs you deem necessary for the implementation of a specific project (case study) and that are not part of fees (Annex 4). The expenditure other than fees is then to be considered as reimbursable cost and shall be reimbursed against real costs. The budget limit set for the case studies covers all costs.

**Q:** **Concerning the filling in of the Annex 6 that in case of consortium is cumulative, the two section of the document - respectively part B "financial and economic capacity" and part C technical capacity" - have to be signed by all members of the consortium or is it fine whether it is signed only by the consortium leader?**

**A:** As regards the financial and economic capacity, please note that Annex 6 includes the footnote

1 which reads as follows:

"1/ If this application is being submitted by a consortium, the data in the table must be the sum of the data in the corresponding tables in the declarations provided by the consortium members..."

It follows that there should be separate tables (the template up to tenderers) and these should be signed by consortium members.

As regards the technical capacity, no such a specific reference was made. The tables should be signed only by the leader of the consortium.

The selection criteria for economic and financial capacity as well as technical capacity will be then assessed in relation to the combined capacities of all members of the consortium as a whole.